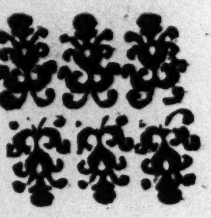
THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIME IN HIS Spirituall CONFLICT, And CONQVEST.



AT PARIS M. DC. LII.

APPROBATIO.

UTI finis Præcepti, *ita & Consilii*, Charitas de corde puro, & Conscientia bona, et Fide non ficta. *Ad quam cum facilitate assequendam, & securius retinendam, compendiosam & Regiam viam sternunt Documenta, quæ in hoc libro, cujus Titulus est*, The Christian Pilgrim, in his spirituall Conflict and Conquest, *continentur: quia in illo nil Fidei Catholicæ repugnans, aut bonis moribus contradicens, invenitur; sed Doctrina pia, sana, & solida; ad quam legendam & sequendam, omnes, qui repleri consolatione, superabundare gaudio, fervere spiritu, crebro suspicere in Cælum, puras manus in oratione levare, suas solicite observare conscientias, & Sanctorum sequi Vestigia cupiunt, sunt invitandi.*

Datum Duaci Januarii
17. anno 1652.
Stilo Novo.

Fra: RUDESINDUS BARLO,
Sacræ Theologiæ Doctor & Professor in Collegio *Vedastino Duaceno.*

The ſame Approbation Engliſhed.

THE *End* of the Counſell, as well as of *the Commandement, is Charitie out of a pure Heart, & of a good Conſcience, & of Faith unfeigned*. Which to obtain with facility, and retain with ſecurity, the Documents contained in this book, intituled, *The Chriſtian Pilgrim in his Spiritual Conflict and Conqueſt*, Shew a plain and compendious way; For therein nothing is found diſsonant to our Catholique Faith, or repugnant to Piety; but a holy, ſound, and ſolid Doctrine: To the peruſall and practiſe whereof, all they are invited, who deſire to be repleniſhed with comfort, to overflow with joy, to be fervent in Spirit, to aſpire frequently towards Heaven, to lift up pure hands in prayer, to preſerve their Conſciences unſpotted, and to follow the ſteps of the holy Saints.

Given at Doway *January the ſeventeenth* 1652. Stilo novo.

Br: RUDESIND BARLO,
Doctor and Profeſſor of Divinity in the Vedaſtin *College* Doway.



1 Pet. 5. 8.

Be ſober, be vigilant; becauſe your adverſary the Devill, as a roaring Lion walkes about, ſeeking whom he may devour: whom reſiſt, ſtedfaſt in Faith

THE SPIRITVAL CONFLICT:

OR

The ARRAIGNMENT of the Spirit of Selfe-love and Sensuality, at the Barre of Truth and Reason.

First published in *Spanish*, by the Reverend Father *John Castaniza*, a Benedictin Monk of

ONA:

Afterwards, put into the *Latine*, *Italian*, *German*, *French*, and now lastly into the *English Tongue*, according to the Originall Copy.

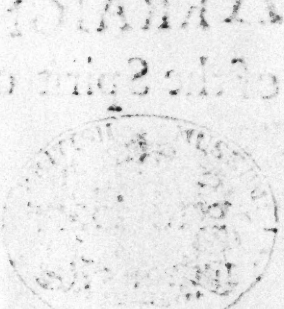
With many profitable Additions and Explications.

The Second Edition

Job 7. 1.

Mans Life is a Warfare upon Earth.

AT PARIS, M. DC. LII.



42.

Ephesians 6. 10, 11.

My brethren, be strong in our Lord, and in the power of his might,

Put on the Armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devill.

James 4. 7.

Be subject to God; resist the Devill, and he will flee from you.

Matth. 26. 41. Mark 13. 38.

Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.

1. Cor. 16. 13.

Stand fast in Faith, quit you like men; be strong, &c.



Hee shall not be crowned who fights not valiantly. 2. Tim: 2. 5.

A Lively pourtraict of the Spirituall Conflict.

To the right Reverend Fathers, Religious Dames, and devout Brothers and Sisters of the holy Order of Saint BENNET.

THIS little book is presented unto *You*; not because the Translator follows the epidemick custome which enforceth the complement of a *Dedication*; or expects any return of temporal profit from *you*; or stoops *you* to so low a Patronage,

nage, as to become Goſſipps to this adopted child; (which are the vulgar ends of almoſt all preſents of this nature, wherby the Receivers are rather engaged than gratified:) But meerly as an humble oblation of *Filial duty and reſpect.* For he pretends not to caſt in his mite, or bring a gift to *your* ſpirituall treaſury, but only to pay a little parcell of his larger debt, and to give *you* an account of ſome houres of his time, which he acknow-

knowledgeth ſhould be *all* employed in *your* ſervice. Beſides, he but reſtores unto *you*, what was your own before, by another and a nearer title of *Confraternity*; and only new cloath's a *Spaniſh Monk* of St. *Bennet*'s holy Order, with *your Engliſh habit*, (a thing both uſuall, and hitherto very ſucceſſull unto you, hoping thereby to make him the better welcome; and not doubting but he will ſpeedily, eaſily, and efficaciouſly inſinuate him-

ſelf into *your* affections, whoſe dayly practices have ſo great ſympathy with his divine doctrine.

For what are (or ſurely ſhould be,) the continuall endeavours of a true *Benedictin Monk*, (and indeed of all devout Chriſtians) but to quell and conquer *the world*, *the fleſh*, *and the Devill*, according to the Principles of Truth; to ſubdue *ſenſe to reaſon*; to make his very *paſſions*, (by taming them,) uſefull, and his *affections*, (by fixing them upon the right

right object,) instrumentall to the attaining of perfection; and to study *self-knowledg*, practice *self-hatred*, and persevere in *self-denial*? that *God* may be the sole possessor of his heart, the only mover of his affections, and the all-ruler in his whole man, having now no *self-will* left to hinder his holy operation.

And this is the only drift of this devout Treatise; which may therefore fully serve *you* and

(and all pious Pilgrims travelling to their heavenly home) for a clear glass, wherein *you* may see your own souls without flattery, discover your spirituall blemishes without partiality, learn the rare secret of rooting out vices, implanting vertues, improving all accidents to your best profit, and trimming up your interiours to your highest advantage for the sweet entertainment of your beloved Spouse, without overmuch pains or prolixity.

You

You are (I say) to look upon this small book, as upon a *Compendious summary* of Christian perfection; or as a little *storehouse*, well fraught with the Originall seeds and simples of all spirituality, from whence other devout druggists, cunning in compositions, have since furnish'd their larger shops, and extracted many ample and indeed some excellent volumes. But because *Art* is long, *Life* short; and this life is lent us to learn the *Art*

of

of living well; what pity is it, that our lives ſhould be more ſpent in reading, than profiting; that men ſhould take more delight in writing, than inſtructing; and that we muſt be forc'd to ſeek a few precepts in many ſheets, which may be plainly ſet down in a few pages? Yet ſuch is the ſtrange itch of writers now a days, that the number of books w^ch^ are extant upon all ſubjects, ſeems to exceed that of the readers, whoſe arms may be as well tired in turning

turning over the vaſt multitude of volumes, as their brains confounded in ſtudying them: So that it were to be heartily wiſhed, that that grave *Doctors advice* were now revived and followed by ſpirituall perſons; which is, That they would only (or at leaſt chiefly) betake themſelves to the ſerious peruſall of *ſome one good Authour*, for their Guide, Governor, and Conductor in the way of the Spirit; if they mean ſpeedily, and ſecurely

to

* S. *Thomas of Aquin.* who being asked, which was the ſpeedieſt and beſt way to become learned? Anſwered, To read only one Book.

to arrive at their desired port of perfection. All other Books, should serve as certain solaces of their appetites, some changes of diet, or holy divertisements in devotion; but *this* (which they have advisedly made choyce of) should be their Souls Dayly bread, and the ordinary, familiar, and naturall food and sustenance which it should strive to chew and digest. *This* (I say) should be their *School of Defence*, where they are to learn the

the right *use of their spirituall weapons*; how to Train, Muſter, and Order the Army of their unruly paſſions and affections; how to ſtand upon their guard when an Alarm is given, or an aſſault made by their enemies; how to apply fit ſalvs to their ſores, when they are worſted and wounded in the skirmiſh; and finally how to behave themſelvs in all emergent occaſions of troubles and temptations, or other accidents whatſoever. And

And though I presume not to propose unto *you* this Brother of yours, as a more absolute master in this Art, than your famous and renowned Abbots, *Gersen*, *Cisnerius*, *Blosius*, and many other excellent and experienc'd Champions of your Order, with whom he will not enter into the least competition: Yet I may with *him* safely promise, that whosoever shall faithfully and perseverantly practise what he here prescribes, shall find this

In the 40. chap. of this Book.

this Book, though very *little in bulk*, yet large enough *in vertue and ſubſtance* to conduct him to the happy end he ayms at, to his ſoul's unſpeakable comfort and content.

Neither is he to be diſeſteemed for the plainneſs of his expreſſions; for his intent being to touch the heart, rather than to tickle the Ears, he delivers ſolid ſenſe in undiſguiſed words: And the *Interpreter*, being to preſent a true draught of his *Originall*, and

and not to take upon him the priviledge of a Paraphraſt; could not ſhape the quaint language of theſe profane times to the divine notions of his Authour, without evident danger of ſacrilege: and therefore purpoſely avoids all curioſity of ſpeech, wch oftentimes in theſe high matters, rather puzzles, than edifies; and more amuzes the devout Readers underſtanding with niceties, than moves his affectiō to true piety, or makes him

reſolute

resolute in the performance of his duty; which ought to be the only end and aym of all ſpirituall writers; and he is moſt happily and ſufficiently eloquent, who hits this mark, and workes this holy effect; as no doubt but this Religious Author will do in their zealous ſouls, who make the right uſe of his doctrin, in order to their ſpirituall advancement, and *uniõ* with God; whom holy *S. Denys* ſtyles, the *Father of unions*, and who by theſweet bands of love,

draws

draws his intelligent creatures to himself, the essentiall and eternall Unity. *To the which lead and conduct us, ô God, one in Trinity, and Trine in Unity; Father, Son, and holy Ghost.* Amen.

An

An advertisement, To the devout Reader.

You may justly seem to mervail, why this golden Tract is now said to be taught the English *tongue, which was above* fifty years *since transplanted into this Island, out of the gardens of certain* Italian *manuscripts. But if you will take the pains to confront both the Copies, and compare them with their Originall* Spanish, *or else* with *the* Latin *pattern, you will easily perceive this, though not the better, yet to be the far truer* Translation. *For besides very many*

Printed at *Lovain*, in the year 1598.

Printed at *Doway* in the year 1612. and reprinted at *Witenburg*, 1641.

many and materiall differences the 33. Chapter is in that edition altogether forreign to this Authors work; and the whole six last Chapters, (which are most excellent and useful branches of this little tree) are absolutely lopp'd off, and (as it seems) purposely skipp'd over; the Conclusion being in each of them one and the same.

The reason of which omission, as it is obvious to every understanding (which considers that to be directed to Religious women; and some of these left-out Chapters, to concern chiefly the Priestly function;) so it seemes to carry with it sufficient grounds whereupon to build an excuse for the so doing; because women are uncapable to make use of that kind of devotion: But if a Translators

Dedicated to the Nuns of S. Andrew's in Venice, by Hierome Count of Portia.

was duty be well look'd into, (whose chiefest praise consists in faithfulness and sincerity,) we shall no where find that any such privilege of defalkation from his Author's Text, or of addition to the same, doth at all belong to him: Neither do I hereby glance at the least thought of accusation against that first pious Interpreter of this Treatise in our Mother-tongue, who without all doubt deliver'd it to us, as it was given him; But only render an account of my own fidelity in Copying out my Author's Originall; and withall desire such pious women, who shall peruse these excellent Devotions, that they will rather patiently admit one Chapter, *(which concerns them not,) to be inserted into their books; than uncharitably*

The 37. Chapter. How to offer up devoutly the Sacrifice of the Mass.

ritably to desire the razing out of the least tittle, which may be profitable to any one.

And you are to be furthermore advertised, that this Spirituall Conflict *hath been very often printed in the* French *language; Into which it was also translated by the Religious men called* Fulians; *and this Edition of theirs, was (as it truly deserved) receiv'd with the highest applause and liking of all those worthy and illuminated divines of that age; and namely of that famous and blessed Bishop of* Geneva, Francis de Sales, *the mirrour of his time, and most skilfull conductor of souls in the way of the Spirit; who usually recommended the reading and practice thereof to his dearest Disciples tending to Perfection.*

These *Fulians* are reformed Monks, following S. *Bernard* as their Patron, & St. *Bennet* as their Patriark & law-giver; men of great esteem for their sanctity of life, eminency of learning, and exercises of charity.

One

One of which, a man of no mean rank and quality, under-took another Tranſlation *of the ſame Treatiſe, out of an* Italian *Copy, (which he dedicates to the ſame holy Biſhop of* Geneva, *) augmented (as he ſaith) with* 27 Chapters, *(though they are indeed, either bare ſubdiviſions of ſome one Chapter of our Author into divers, (as for example, Our third chapter is there divided into three ſeverall ones;) Or elſe they are more ample explications of* that *Doctrin,* which *is conciſely delivered in the Text; and ſo may with more propriety be termed* Commentaries *than* added Chapters, *) and written by the Reverend Fathers, commonly call'd* Theatins. *And because the endeavours of theſe*

These *Theatins*, are ſo called from their Inſtitutor, *John Peter Garaff*, who was

first Bishop of Theate, in the Kingdome of Naples, & afterwards Pope Paul the fourth men also renowned for their sanctity.

pious men serve much to the elucidation of this Subject, and favour of a sincere spirit of Devotion; I have also made use of their pains for your profit; and transferred hither (by way of Explications) whatsoever in that Edition seemed pertinent, and conducing to the illustration of our Authour: Yet still punctually observing the Text, and division of his own original Spanish, *and the* Latin *traduction of some learned Divines in the University of* Doway, *where it was approved and reprinted in the year* 1612. *If you make your best advantage of these my labours, your own souls will receive the true comfort, and I the full reward I look for.*

To

TO THE

Devout Champions, fighting in this Spirituall Warfare;

The Translator wisheth happy Victory, & the reward of eternal Felicity.

TO you, *dear Souls*, is this little work most fitly addressed; who in this deplorable age, (when the deluge of all vices, & an universall inundation of wickednes covers the face of the Earth, and to which that may be applied, almost as properly as in the time of the generall flood, *All flesh hath corrupted his way*;) having happily left the broad and beaten path of perdition, and estranged your selves from the pernicious Contagion of the times; imploy all your diligence and indeavours to

preſerve your ſouls pure and clean from all worldly filth and infection, and whatſoever may diſpleaſe the eyes of your Heavenly Spouſe; and take all poſſible paines that Gods ſacred Image, ſtamped upon you in Baptiſme, but defaced, or at leaſt much darkened through human frailty and infirmity, may be again reſtored and imbelliſh'd within you: An enterpriſe ſo high and heroique, that no tongue of man can worthily praiſe or expreſs it.

Take courage, *valiant Champions of Heaven*, and faint not in this holy purſute, having Angels and Saints for your helpers and favourers, and the Almighty himſelf, ſtretching out his powerfull hand to conduct you with ſafety and ſecurity through all the throngs of difficulties and dangers; and leading you, as it were, over the bellies of the *Amorrheans*, *Cananeans*, and all other uncircumciſed and profane people, into the true Land of promiſe, the happy Land of Paradice, repleniſh'd with Milk and Hony,

Hony, the bleſſed Land of heaven, full-fraught with eternall and unexplicable ſolaces and ſweetneſſes.

You are alſo ſuited with ſuch excellent armour of proof, both offenſive and defenſive, taken out of the rich ſtore-houſe of *ſacred Scripture*, and the wholeſom doctrin of the *Catholique Church*, as will not only render you invincible againſt all oppoſition, but make you glorious conquerors, and triumphers over al your helliſh adverſaries.

It only remains, that *you* ſeriouſly apply *your* ſelves to learn the uſe of theſe weapons, to get the art and dexterity of fighting to your beſt advantage, and to ſtudy well the manner of theſe ſpirituall skirmiſhes, that ſo *you* may give home-blows both with point and edge, and handſomly ward off thoſe which are made at *you* by your enemies: And then *you* may be confident of an aſſured victory.

And though this holy *Science of Fencing* is largely taught, and plainly ſet forth by many ſpirituall and

skilfull Maſters, both ancient and modern: yet the whole doctrin therof is ſo briefly and familiarly compriſed *in this little Book*, that I know not of any other inſtruction which can be preſented you in this kind, more to your purpoſe and profit; (eſpecially if you want leaſure or conveniency to turn over many or greater volumes;) ſince you may here find the collected ſubſtance, and as it were, the marrow and cream of all the choyceſt precepts, concerning the aforeſaid neceſſary trade of training up your ſelves in the true and practicall knowledge of your ſpirituall weapons.

This miniſtred me the occaſion to tranſlate it, that it might be accommodated to your benefit; and to this I was urged and led on by the ardent deſire of advancing your good, to the utmoſt extent of that ſmall power which the Divine goodneſs hath imparted unto me.

Receive it therefore gratefully, and imbrace it willingly, O moſt *Dear Souls*, as an expert *Tutor* of

arms, and excellent *School-master* of the Spirituall Conflict: by whose directions and documents you may fight undantedly, and infallibly foil, not only the *Flesh* and the *World* together, which wage such cruell and continuall warre with you; but also all the *powers of darkness, and malice of the Devil*, from whom neither peace nor truce can ever be expected: waiting with patience & perseverance for that happie hour, in which it will please your loving Lord to *give you a full deliverance, to banish all war unto the utmost bounds of the earth, to bruse the Bow, break the Weapons, burn the Buckler*, and withdraw your desirous souls from this place of tumults and alarms, to the quiet residence of eternall peace and felicity. To which his Divine goodness grant we may all at last joyfully arrive.

THE SUBJECT OF THE SPIRITUALL CONFLICT.



THis Book, (correſpondent to it's title), is of warrs, fights, and combats, not againſt the lawfull powers

powers of this world, but against the usurped authority of the Prince of darkness; *who sits inthron'd, as sole Monark of this inverted Universe, in opposition to God and all goodness; tyrannizing and trampling down all vertue, piety and religion; clipping* Faith's *sacred wings, and blinding her with sin and sensuality; destroying and driving out all justice and sincerity from amongst the sons of men, and endeavouring to substitute* double-hearted fraud, *with all sort of prophaness, impiety, and infidelity, in their stead.*

Eph. 6. 12. Against the rulers of the darkness of this world, &c. 2 Thes. 2. 4 Shewing himself as if he were God, &c. Psal. 12. 1. Truth is diminish'd amongst the children of men.

The necessity of fighting against these monsters, is a sufficient commendation of this our holy enterprise; For we are put here *expresly* for this purpose; *All men are included in this* Spiritual Warfare, *nor is there any exemption from* combating, *where there is the least expectation of* conquering, *or hope of being* crowned. *How highly then doth it concern each Christian, to learn so to* combat *that he may* con-

2 Tim. 2. 5. No one shalbe crowned, who fights not. 1 Thes. 3. 3 We are appointed hereunto, &c. Job 7. 1. Man's life is a warfare, 2 Tim. 2. 12. If we suffer, we shall also reign,

quer

quer, *if he attends ever to be crowned?*

Ephes. 4. 25. Depose all lying, &c. Colos. 3. 8 Depose all these, wrath, malice, blasphemy, &c 1 Pet. 2. 1. Rom. 6. 12 13, 14. Let not sin reign in your mortal body, &c.

The Sum of this desired Conquest, *consists in deposing the* devil, *and setting up* God *in our souls; in subduing* Sense *to Reason's empire; in bringing the* Animal man *under the feet of the* Intellectual; *in raising up the* Intellectual man *to his proper Sphar which is his* Creator; *and in* uniting the Spirit *to it's true object and Centre, which is the* Divinity.

The way to arrive at this high and happy Union, *is by continual and indefatigable tendencies of the soul to* God, *in the track of sincere and solid* Devotion.

Ephes. 4. 5 One Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, &c.

This solid Devotion *depends upon* Religion, *as the branch on it's tree; and since there can be but one right* Religion, *as there is one only Faith, one law, one Lord, one Jesus Christ; so there can be but one real* Devotion, *and all others must needs be concluded unsecure, superstitions, hypocriticall, hypocondriacal.*

Now

Now left we should miss this right way, or mistake this real Devotion, *we may here fitly, at our first entrance into these holy lists, take a general view of this* Animal, Sensual, *and* Carnal man, *which is to be destroyed; of this* Counterfeit, Hypocritical, *and* Hypocondriacal man, *which is to be undeceived; and of this* Spiritual, Supersensual, *and* Perfect man, *which is to be brought into us, and built up within us; that so framing a right Idea of the end we aym at, we may follow those means, which appear most proportionable for the attaining thereof.*

THE

THE ANIMAL, CARNAL, AND SENSUAL MAN



Is he who gives up the raynes of his Reason *to the intire conduct of* Sensuality, *and puts his ſoul into the* devils *power, (by ſubmitting to all ſinfull*

sinfull suggestions), *to be driven and dragg'd on uncontrollably to all wickedness. He* walks *after the world's perverse course and custom, living in all things according to his own* lust *and liking; acknowledging no other* Superior *than his own all-swaying* affections, *no* law *but that of his* own will, *no* God *but his* belly. *He easily yields to all his untam'd* passions *and appetites; glutting his* senses *unrestrainedly with all alluring objects; and making* pleasure *his only end, heaven, and happiness. Briefly, he is all earth, all sin, all sensuality; in whom is nothing of the Spirit, of grace, of God: his* Understanding *is a dungeon of darkness; his* Memory *a Magazin of bestial imaginations; his* Will *a confusion of base and brutish affections; and his* whole man *totally depraved and degenerate; resembling the filthy* swine, *the unclean* goat, *and the unbridled* horse *and* mule, which have no understanding.

Ephes. 2. 2 You walked according to the cours of this world, according to the Prince of the ayr, &c.

1. Cor. 2. 14. The animal man perceives not the things of God's Spirit, &c. Philip. 3. 19. Whose God is their belly. James. 3: 15. This Wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensu-

al, devilish, &c. Jude v. 19 Sensual, having not the Spirit, Ps. 31. 9.

THE

THE HYPOCONDRIACAL, HYPOCRITICAL AND COUNTERFEIT MAN.



Tinnit : inane est.

Tinnit; Inane est.

Ps. 143. 5. Touch the mountains and they will smoak

Is he who makes a great shew of sanctity and devotion, but hath nothing of *substance, sincerity, and solidity. Touch him, and he turns into smoak; sound him, and you shall*

soon

soon find him to be but a windy cask, Nahum,
found up with ayr, an empty eccho, 2.0.2.
a hollow reyse, a flatuous and foolish She is
nothing. He wilfully mistakes the empty,
means for the end, and places per- void, and
fection in pompous forms, Phari- waste.
cal fashions, and external practices: 1.Cor.13.
If he prays, 'tis in publick; if he 1.
gives alms, he sounds the trumpet; As sound-
if he fasts, he disfigures his counte- ing brass,
nance; if he seemingly punish his or a tink-
body, 'tis to deceive more surely ling cym-
under the guise of sanctity; finally, bal.
all his actions rather savour of self- Mat.6.2.
satisfaction and hypocrisy, than to the 16
have any sense of true piety. Yet he Luke.18.
ever pretends to high lights of the I am not
Spirit, finds out new and unheard- as other
of ways of walking with God, sleights men are.
all that is common, though never so
commendable, and catches at all that
is curious, though never so danger-
ous. Thus he loseth himself in his
own Chymerical conceptions, and
pretending to refine ancient piety,
becomes puff'd up with secret pride
and presumption, and grasps no-
thing but froth and vanity

THE



It's he who walks not in the wayes of this wicked world, nor follows the tenents of flesh, and blood, *but of* Reason,

Reaſon, Religion, *and* Underſtanding. *His only end and aym is the* Perfection of God's love in his ſoul; *his unwearied endeavours are bent againſt* Satan, Sin, Senſuality, *and all* Selfiſhneſs; *his main ſtudy, is to make his* body *obedient to the* Spirit, *his Spirit to* Reaſon, *his Reaſon to* Faith, *and All to* God; *and his daily practice is ſelf-maſtery and* Mortification. *And having,*

1. *Trampled down the Man of ſin,*
2. *Layd a ſure and ſolid groundwork of Devotion,*
3. *He faithfully applies himſelf to fight under Chriſt's banner, and learns exactly the right uſe of his ſpirituall weapons,*
4. *He carefully eſchews his enemies Ambuſhes,*
5. *He keeps himſelf to the continual practice of prayer, introverſion, recollection, abſtraction, annihilation, contemplation,*
6. *He courageouſly climbs up to the mountain top of Perfection,*
7. *And laſtly he ſweetly repoſes in divine love and Union*; as is more amply held forth in theſe following Treatiſes.

Rom. 8. *per totum* If you live after the fleſh, you ſhall dy.

1 Cor. 3. 16. You are the temple of God, & Gods Spirit dwels in you, &c

Rom. 8. 36 Pſ. 44. 22. For thy ſake we are mortified all the day long, &c.

Coloſſ. 3. 5

Gal

Galathians 6. 8, 9, &c.

What things a man ſha
ſow, thoſe alſo ſhall he reap
For he that ſoweth in his fleſh
of the fleſh alſo ſhall reap cor-
ruption: But he that ſowet
in the Spirit, of the Spir
ſhall reap life everlaſting.

Pſalme 125. 6.

They that ſow in Teares,
ſhall reap in Joyfullneſs.

Going they went, and wept,
caſting their ſeeds.

But coming they ſhall come
with Exultations carrying
their Sheaves.

THE

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I Kings. 15: 18.

Thou shalt fight against them vntill their vtter destruction:

(With the four Weapons of the Spirituall Combatant; Diffidence of thy selfe, Confidence in God, Continuall Exercise and Deuout Prayer.

THE
Spiritual Conflict:
OR,
the Perfection of a Christian life.

CHAP. I.

Wherein Christian Perfection consists: and of four things necessary to obtain it.

IF thou heartily and seriously desirest, (*and dearly beloved in Christ,*) to reach the sublimity of Christian perfection, and to be truly united to the Lord God, by becomming one with him, (which is the most profitable employment, and the most excellent and divine enterprise imaginable;) it highly imports thee to understand in the first place

The importance of this knowledg.

wherein this perfection of ſpirituall life conſiſts.

Some place perfection in auſterity.

2. For ſome there are, who for want of this neceſſary conſideration, imagine that this high perfection is placed in leading an auſtere life, in the maceration of the fleſh, in the uſe of hair-cloth, in much faſting, watching, and the like rigorous exercises, and bodily afflictions.

Others in reciting many prayers.

3. Others, eſpecially women, judge of their progreſſe in ſpirituality, by their daily recitall of many prayers, their aſſiſting at many Maſſes, their frequent Confeſſions, and Communions.

Others in their exact obſervance.

4. And there are very many, (yea even ſome of them, Religious and cloyſter'd perſons) who perſwade themſelves that perfection conſiſts in frequenting the Quire, in the exact obſervance of ſilence, and ſolitude, and in well-ordered diſcipline.

All which are good means, but not directly tending to perfection.

5. Thus ſome by theſe pious practices, ſome by other externall exercises, tend to this deſired perfection but are all wide of the direct way leading unto it: For though theſe outward and devout employments conduce

conduce very much towards the attaining it, yet in them alone, and their exactest observance, it consists not: It's true, that the discreet use of them, is doubtlesly a forcible means to obtain the Grace of the holy Ghost, to fortify us against our fellen frailty; to shield & arm us against the deceits and assaults of our common and cruell enemy: and finally to perform our practices of piety (especially whilst we are new-champions and Novices in this spirituall conflict) with more sweetness and alacrity: Yea they produce plenty of fruits to them also who are well-experienced and skilfull combatants in this holy warfare; who therefore afflict their body, because it hath been instrumentall to the offence of their Creatour; therefore love silence and live in solitude, to shun all occasion of sinne, and to attend their heavenly meditations with more quiet and tranquillity, being untangled from the worlds impediments; they are devout and diligent performers of the divine office; they are fervent and frequent in works of charity, in

prayer, and holy Communion; and all this for no other reason than God's honour and Glory, and to unite themselves to him, by the sacred bonds of sincere affection.

And they that rest in these lower exercises are in great danger;

6. Yet they who rest here, and place their end in these outward exercises, do oft times endanger their own Salvation; and this not by reason of the exercises themselves, (which are truly and naturally holy, and warranted by the practice and example of many great and glorious Saints,) but for that they are so totally attentive to these lower exercises, as they leave their inward man in its naturall affections, and unrescued from the snares of the devill. For the deceitfull fiend, finding them gone astray in following their affections to those devotions, gives them not only peace but also pleasure in the pursuance of them; they seeme to taste the very sweets of Paradise, yea to walk and talk with God, and heare his divine whispers in their Souls; such is their vain perswasion! And are somtimes so absorpt in their curious and deep fancies of meditation, that they conceit themselves

even

even separated from the world, sever'd from all creatures, and rapt into the third heaven.

7. But how dangerously all such Souls are deceived, and how wide they are strayed from the right way of perfection, will easily appeare by the rest of their actions: For they are commonly very singular, curious, censurers of their neighbours lives and conversations, and prone to murmur at their proceedings: And when themselves are advertised of their own errours, or never so little hindred from their accustomed exercises, (which they frequent chiefly for fashion's sake,) or barr'd from the ordinary use of the Sacraments; you shall presently perceive them fall into passion, unquietnesse, and despair. As may appeare by the rest of their actions,

8. And if it pleaseth God, (to the end they may truly understand their own state,) to send them some infirmity, or permit some tribulation to befall them, (for such trialls are his touchstones, whereby he proves his servants sincerity;) O how soon shall you discover the false foundation whereon they built the edifice And especially by their want of resignation in time of affliction.

of their feigned devotion? how rotten is their inward man, and how full of secret pride? For they refuse to resigne their wills, and to humble their hearts under God's powerfull hand, in all the changeable courses of prosperity and adversity: They will not, according to the divine example of God's humble suffering Son, subject themselves to all creatures, nor take their seeming enemies, (that which truly they are) to be their true freinds, as being instruments of God's goodnesse, promotours of their perfection, and helpers in the reformation of their unmortified passions: which is an evident signe of their dangerous state. For the eyes of their souls are dazzled and corrupted by gazing upon these outward actions, (though good,) arrogating to themselves, I know not what degrees of perfection; and from thence falling into self-conceit, they judge rashly, and contemn others. Nor can they be recalled or cured, unlesse God himselfe strikes strongly at the doore of their hearts, and dissipates the darknesse of their interiour with the

the divine rays of his gracious light; making them see their own danger, and seeke the remedie: For a great and manifest sinner is more easily reclaimed, than a seeming Saint; whose secret iniquity, is shrouded under the appearance of vertue and piety.

Thus then it is manifest unto thee, (*o my beloved,*) that spirituall perfection consists not at all in the aforesaid practices and perswasions. Know therefore that it is placed in no other thing than *In the true knowledge of Gods goodnesse and greatnesse; and of our own baseness, miserie, and nothing, and of the proneness of our naturall affections to all malice*: Also, *in the hatred of our selves, and the love of God*: And lastly, *in the absolute denying of our own will, and entire resignation of it to the divine will and pleasure*: That is, that we totally submit our selves, not onely to the Almighty God, but even to every one of his creatures for his sake; and this for no other end, than onely to please his divine Majesty, who deserves to be purely served, highly honoured, perfectly praised and glorified by all.

True perfection therefore, consists in the knowledg of God and our selves.

In the love of God, and hatred of our selves; In resignation to Gods will, and denying of our own.

All which Christ hath taught us by word and example.

10. This is the *Abnegation* which Christ our saviour so often inculcated; This is the *Obedience*, to which God's sonne invites and directs his faithful followers, both by his words and by his example; This is the desirable *Crosse*, which his diligent servants are to lay on their shoulders, and so follow the steps of their Saviour; This is that love, which our Lord so seriously, frequently and carefully recommended to the whole world, and especially to his Disciples, as his particular friends and children, after his last supper.

And we must also do it, if we mean to purchase victory.

11. If then (*my dearly beloved*) thou intendest to attaine to this high perfection; thou must use violence to thy selfe, and vanquish thine own affections both great and small; thou must affect this fight, and instruct thy mind to wage this holy war. For the crown of victory is conferred only upon the stout and lawfull combatants.

Nor is there any thing more glorious to our selves, or more gratefull to God.

12. For as this battell (we now treat of) is the greatest, and of most difficulty; so is the ensuing victory most glorious to our selves, and most gratefull to God: in so much as

as if thou overcomest, subduest, mortifiest, and rootest out thine own disordinate and unruly affections; thou offerest up to God a more agreeable sacrifice, than if (neglecting this) thou shouldst whip thy body till it were embrued in it's own blood, or fast beyond the austerity of the strictest Anchorites, or convert thousands of Infidels and sinners to Christ's faith and perfect pennance: For though the conversion of souls bee in it self more dear to our Lord God, than the renouncing of our own wills in small matters, yet it is thy part to will and do that chiefly and most carefully which Hee most strictly requires of thee: And this is undoubtedly the serious mortification of thy untamed passions, wherein thou shalt better please him, than in any other highest and holiest employment.

13. Being thus instructed, (*ô dearly beloved,*) wherein Christian perfection consisteth; and that to obtaine it, thou must adventure upon a cruel and continuall warre, if thou intendest to be a conqueror: It befits thee like a stout

But to obtain it, we must provide four necessary weapons.

Christian champion, to arme thy-selfe with *Four* necessary weapons, which are,

1. *Diffidence of thy self.*
2. *Confidence in God.*
3. *Continuall exercise.*
4. *Devout prayer.*

Of all which weapons, I shall (by Gods assistance) now briefly treat, according to their severall orders.

Chap. II.

Of the diffidence, or distrust of our selves.

Distrust of our selves, which is gotten; First by a deep sense of our own nothing.

THis *diffidence of thy selfe*, may be obtained by three manner of wayes: *First*, by a deepe sense of thine own baseneſſe and misery, truly acknowledging that of thy selfe thou canst not doe the least good thing: For man can no more effect any good or meritorious work by his own power, than a stone (if I may say it) is able of it-selfe to ascend upwards: and he hath almost the like inclination to evill, as a heavie stone hath to the Earth's centre.

The

2. The *second* way to get this self-diffrust, is to demand it of him, whose gracious gift it is, with humble and earnest prayers: And to prevail in thy petition, thou must first yield that thou truly wanteſt it, and that of thy self thou canſt never attain to it: and thus totally naked, preſent thy prayer with a conſtant faith, and a courageous hope to be heard, and to obtain this deſired diffidence of thy ſelf. But let thy prayer encreaſe in dayly fervour, and expect with perſeverance the divine pleaſure in the grant of thy petition: and then be confident, it will ſooner or later be granted unto thee. 2. By Prayer.

3. The *Third* is, That as oft as thou faileſt and falleſt into ſin, thou preſently turn thy ſoules eye toward thine own baſeneſſe, miſery, and inabilily to act any thing that is good; for untill this be truly known, and humbly acknowledged by thee, never hope to be ſecure from falling. 3. By often reflecting upon our own weakneſſe.

4. Whoſoever therefore aſpires to a bleſſed union with the increated verity, muſt firſt ſtudy this neceſſary leſſon of ſelfe-knowledge. For God permits the proud & preſumptuous And this ſelf-knowledge, is a leſſon muſt needs be learn'd.

to

to fall ſometimes into ſome grievous ſin, that ſo they may be forced to confeſſe their own frailty, and impotency: and according as their pride is greater or leſſe, ſo is their fall more or leſſe grievous: in ſo much, as if there were no pride in man, (as there was none in the ſacred Virgin *Mary*) there ſhould likewiſe be no fall into any ſin.

And we muſt bee carefull to riſe ſpeedily after our fall.

5. Wherefore preſently upon thy fall; haſten thy thoughts to an humble reflexion upon thine own nothing; beg inſtantly and ardently of thy Lord God, his true and inward light, to ſee thy own frailty and infirmity, and to keep thee from more dangerous fallings for the future.

EXPLICATION.

The great neceſſity of this diſtruſt in our own ſtrength.

THis diſtruſt of thy ſelfe (*my dearly beloved*) is ſo neceſſary for thee in this combat, that without it, thou canſt not onely never hope to obtain thy ſo-much-deſired conqueſt over thy enemies, but not ſo much as to ſurmount the leaſt of thy paſſions or imperfections. Thou art therefore ſeriouſly and frequent-

ſy

ly to reflect upon the corruption of thy naturall inclination, which makes thee apt to conceive a good opinion of thy selfe and thine own actions, and to perswade thy selfe that thou art something, when as indeed thou art nothing at all. Weigh further the vanity and presumption of such self-conceits, and the weakneſſe of thine own forces; and consider how displeasing the one is to the divine Majesty, and how pleasing the other; for our Lord loves a free confession of our own frailty, and a reall acknowlegment of our totall dependancy upon his power and providence, from whose bounty and benignity all grace and goodneſſe is derived into our souls; since being left to our selves, we can neither think nor act any one thing which hath the least degree of worth or merit.

is inforced by the corruption of our nature;

And the weakneſſe thereof;

And by considering how this acknowledgment pleaseth God, and how much presumption displeaseth him.

Wherefore study well this first and fundamentall lesson, as being a matter of highest importance, and yet the work of God's holy hand, which he teacheth his deare freinds, sometimes by his heavenly inspirations, other times by permitting them

Thou art therefore to study this fundamentall lesson.

them to fall grievously, and to bee tempted violently, and by other wayes unknown to thy selfe: and be sure to make serious use of the three proposed ways in the precedent chapter; by the due performance and practice whereof, and thy concurrence with God's never-wanting grace, thou mayst confidently hope to attain it.

Chap. III.

Of Confidence in God.

1 THou seest then how usefull and needfull this *Self-distrust* is: but yet if thou entrest the field to fight with that onely weapon, thou must look to be either speedily vanquish'd, or basely put to flight. Wherefore having fitted thy selfe with this first armour, *Distrust* of thy selfe; let thy next diligence be imployed to get a pious *Confidence in God*, begging, hoping, and expecting from him all good, and help whatsoever. In obtaining whereof, make use also of these three advices.

2 Confidence in God, which is obtained

1 By prayer.

2. For first thou art to crave it instantly, ardently and humbly of the divine Majesty.

3. Then

3. Then, thou art to consider his wonderfull power, and contemplate his infinite wisdome, from whence thou wilt conclude, that nothing is either impossible to him, or difficult. Then weigh his boundlesse goodnesse, which is ever ready to powre plentifully upon thee all necessaries for thy spirituall proficiency, and all things usefull for thy gaining an intire victory over thy enemies. For how can it be possible that this holy and heavenly Shepheard, who for full thirty-three yeares space hath so carefully run after this stray'd sheep, so lovingly recall'd her home to himselfe; so painfully sought her, and so dearly bought her with the price of his bloud, and losse of his life; should avert his eyes of compassion from her when shee cryes, calls, and converts her self unto him? Oh, how can he forget his own promise, and not lay her upon his sacred shoulders, and celebrate a Feast of joy and jubilation with his heavenly Citizens for her happy reduction? Or who can imagine, that our loving Lord God, who so much desires

2 By considering the divine power, wisdome and goodnesse, by which he can, knowes how, and is willing to help.

desires to dwell in our hearts, and feast in our soules; and to this end, is ever knocking at those doores for admittance, that so he may repleniſh us with the Heavenly Treaſures of his graces; ſhould then ſhut his eares, when we open to him our hearts, or ſhould refuſe to give us admittance, when wee humbly and earneſtly invite him to our banquet?

3. By meditating upon holy writt.

4. And thirdly, For the obtaining this holy confidence and truſt in God; make uſe of the infallible truth of ſacred Scriptures: which frequently and manifeſtly tell thee, that who ſo place their *Confidence* in their Lord God, are never confounded.

An other means is by thinking on our own frailty, and Gods omnipotency at the beginning of each action.

5. There is alſo another way to get this *Diſtruſt* of our ſelves and *Confidence* in God; Which is, never to ſet upon any work, before thou firſt makeſt reflection upon thine own frailty, and thy Lords omnipotency. For if thou obſerveſt not this order in the beginning of thy enterpriſes, thou ſhalt find thy ſelf oftentimes deceived, even when thou thinkeſt to have undertaken them in the beſt manner: becauſe pride and

pre-

presumption are so inherent in our nature, that our whole live's diligence, is scarcely sufficient to drive them out; and therefore thou must so order thine actions, that still the thought of thine own nothing, and God's all sufficiency, and readinesse to assist thee, goe before them. And here, look diligently to thy selfe, that thou be not deceived: For oftentimes when thou imagineſt to have truly attained to this *Diffidence* in thy selfe, and *Confidence* in God, thou art farre short of it; as thou mayest easily perceive, by the remaining motions of thy mind, and frequent fallings into imperfections: For if these relapses make thee sad, unquiet, and in a manner desperate of thy spirituall progresse; it is an evident signe that thy confidence is in thy selfe onely, and not in thy Creatours goodnesse: And if thy sadnesse and despaire be great, great also is thy confidence in thy self, and litle is thy trust in God; as on the contrary, if thou hast a true distrust of thy own selfe, and a perfect confidence in God onely, thou wilt not much marvell at thy own frailty, nor bee

Whereby we shall not be foolishly dejected at our frequent fallings.

be vainly dejected at thy frequent fallings, which proceed from thy own weaknesse, and therefore hinder not thy confidence in God's goodnesse. So that thou wilt conceive a holy anger against thy self for thy sinnes, and with an humble sorrow for thy offence, wilt trust hereafter lesse to thy self, and more in God; and with a new-enkindled zeale, and greater courage than before, wilt follow thy begun enterprize to get the victory in this spirituall warfare, and pursue thy enemies even to death.

A necessary caveat for all spirituall people.

6. And would to God these truthes were diligently div'd into by some, who seeme to bee spirituall; and yet they no sooner fall into defects, but they presently become impatient, and cannot be quieted, till they have recourse to their ghostly Father, rather for their own solace, than for any true devotion: when as the prime motive of their comming to him should be to purge their soules from sin by absolution, and to obtaine new strength against their enemies by the sacred Communion.

EXPLI-

EXPLICATION.

As we can promise to our selves nothing but sayings & fallings, because we are of our selves nothing; so also we may certainly promise to our selves from our God an intire victory over all our enemies, if we arm our hearts with a lively confidence in his divine Majesty. But many deceive themselves in supposing that the pusillanimity and disquiet following their fall, is an effect of virtue, because it is accompanied with a displeasure for their offence; when as indeed it springs from pride and presumption, and is founded in selfe-confidence, and conceit of their own strength, to which they too much trusting, find by the wofull experience of their fall, that they are truly weak, and really nothing, and thereupon they become troubled & astonished, as at a new thing; and so lose their courage, seeing that prop which sustained their vain confidence, fallen down to the ground. But this befalls not them who are truly *humble*; For they confiding in God alone, nothing presuming of

By God's assistance we can do all things.

Wherein many are deceived,

By reason of their pride and presumption in their owne strength.

of themselves, when they chance to fall into any fault, feele indeed a true grief in their souls; but are neither disquieted nor astonished, seeing clearly (by the light of truth) that this proceeds from their own misery, frailty, and presumption.

Chap. IV.

Of continuall exercise: and first, that the Understanding is carefully to be kept from Ignorance, and from Curiosity.

The third spirituall weapon, is continuall exercise.

It hath been hitherto declared, how much this *Distrust of our selves*, and *trust in Gods goodnesse*, help us on, in our spirituall conflict: But they alone are yet insufficient to gain the victory, and keep us from relapses; and therefore besides these two, a third weapon is necessary, which we above tearmed *Continuall Exercise*; and this chiefly consists in the rectified use of our Understanding and Will.

Which consists, in the right use of the understanding.

2. First therefore the Understanding is to be carefully kept from two great evils, *Ignorance*, and *Curiosity*:

sity: From *Ignorance*, that it may
bee pure and cleare, and so we may
see what is necessary for the taming
of our passions, and overcomming of
our affections.

The understanding is to be kept from Ignorance,

3. And this light may be obtained
two manner of wayes; First and
chiefly by earnest *Prayer*, invoking
and imploring God's holy Spirit to
infuse this light into thy soule. Se-
condly, by *daily practice* of a pro-
found and accurate search into all
thine own actions and affairs; not
only as they appeare outwardly, but
rather as they are truly in them-
selves. Doe but make tryall of this
exercise for a time, and thou wilt
come easily to understand what
things and actions are good, and
what are evill; as also what are
truly good, and what are onely in
shew, promising much by their out-
ward splendour, but performing
indeed nothing, nor any way con-
ducing to the quiet of thy consci-
ence.

First, by prayer,

Secondly, by a diligent search into our owne actions.

Ex-

Explication.

This searcheth into all things according to their true worth, will open our eyes to see the meanesse of all worldly vanities.

THis point, [which is, *to estimate all things according to their true and reall worth and goodnesse*] being well practised, will open our eyes to see the poornesse of all such toys which worldlings most desire and delight in; It will shew us, that earthly honours and pleasures, are meer vanities and afflictions of spirit; That injuries, infamies and affronts, patiently suffered, are the harbingers of true happinesse and glory; That afflictions are indeed friendships, and that seeming crosses are followed with certain contentments; That to despise the world, is better than to be master of it; and that to be willingly obedient for the love of God, to the meanest creature, is a more magnanimous action, and the signe of a more generous spirit, than to command the greatest Kings; That the humble ackowledgment of our own nothing, is more acceptable to the divine Majesty, than to dive into the height and depth of all sciences; That to quel and conquer our owne

appetites

appetites and imperfections, though they be never so small, merits more praise, than to force the strongest holds, than to triumph over the greatest armies, than to worke the greatest miracles, or raise the dead out of their graves. All which things, and others of like nature, are not sincerely discerned by us, because before we enter into our selves to weigh them well as we ought, and as they truly are, we permit our fancy to be prevented, prepossessed, and surprized, with some sensuall affection towards them; which so darkens and dimms our understandings, that they are rendred uncapable to judge of those objects rightly and impartially, as they should, and they truly deserve.

Text. A necessary cavear to keep the will from fixing it's love

4. Wherefore give an attentive care (*ô dearly beloved*) to what I shall now tell thee, for it will much further thee to fight successefully: The means to know the true nature and properties of all things, which occurre in thy daily transactions, is by taking speciall care to keep thy will pure and free from all motion of

of love and affection, which looks not directly upon God himself, or upon the means leading unto him. For to the end thy *Understanding* may rightly distinguish good from evill, it must first consider it, before thy Will hath made it's election or reprobation of it; because when the Will hath fastned once it's affection upon the object, the *Understanding* is hindred from comming to a true knowledg thereof; by reason that the consent of the *Will* intervening, leaves it so involved and obscured, that it appeares farre fairer to the *Understanding*, than it is in it self: And hence it happens, that the object being thus falsly represented to the Will, becomes too too passionately beloved and embraced, without the due enquiry of its reall goodnesse: And by how much the desire or love of the *Will* is more vehement; by so much the *Understanding* is more grosly clowded in its judgement; and being so deceived invites the *Will* to an encrease of affection towards it. So that these too cheif powers of man's soul, miserably deceived and misled, walk

Untill the Understanding have first pondered the object.

walk equally as in a circle, from this darkneſſe into others, and fall from one great errour, into others more grievous.

5. Take heed therefore of faſtning thy affection upon any thing whatſoever, before it be wel weighed and examined by the *Underſtanding*, and recommended to God in prayer; that ſo thou maiſt truly diſcerne, whether it be good or evill. And to this I exhort thee, not only in all indifferent things, but even in them alſo which are good and holy; for though they are evidently good in themſelves, yet they may prove otherwiſe to thee by reaſon of ſome circumſtance of time, place, meaſure, or obedience: Whence it often happens, that many have endangered themſelves in their moſt laudable and holieſt exerciſes.

And the ſame caveat is neceſſary alſo in holy things.

6. Thou muſt alſo warily retain thy *Underſtanding* from *Curioſity*; leſt it draw that into the ſoul, which may retard it in the intended purchaſe of victory. For a curious enquiry after earthly things, which are impertinent to thy ſpiritual purpoſe, though it may bee ſometimes permitted

The Underſtanding is to be alſo weaned from Curioſity.

mitted, yet, tis generally the poyſon of the ſpirit: Reſtrain therefore thy *Underſtanding* to thy utmoſt, and ſtrive to make it ſimple and fooliſh. As for the changes and chances in the world, whether they be great or ſmall, if they concern thee not, conſider them not. And when thou needs muſt heare or behold them, let thy *Will* alwayes contradict them. Yea even in the knowledge of heavenly things, be ſober and humble, and content thy ſelf in the onely deſire to know thy crucified Saviour, and his bleſſed life and death. Abandon all other things; for ſo thou ſhalt yield to thy Lord a moſt gratefull ſervice, who puts them into the liſt of his beſt freinds, that deſire no more knowledge than what is ſufficient to inflame their hearts in the love of his goodneſſe, and hatred of their own wickedneſſe, for in the ſearch of all other knowledg, nothing but ſelf-love and a certain pernicious pride, lyes ſecretly lurking.

And made ſimple and fooliſh to worldly things.

7. If thou thus weaneſt thy *Underſtanding* from theſe curioſities, thou ſhalt happily eſcape many ambuſhes of thy enemies: For the wicked

How highly this conduceth to perfection,

wicked spirit, marking the unchangeable will and resolution of those travellers tending to spirituall perfection, not to yield their consent to sin; layes his crafty plots first against their *Understanding*, that so he may by little and little get the mastery over it, and the Will together. To this end, hee suggests to the learned and sharpwitted, sublime and subtile conceits; that they may think themselves already united to the divinity, & so forget themselves, and give over the correction of their own consciences, the resignation of their wills, and study of their own nothing: And thus they are insnared with pride, and make to themselves a certain Idoll of their own wisdome in their *Understandings*; and are so highly puffed up and perplexed in these vain thoughts, that they now perswade themselves, not to stand in any need of others counsell or direction.

And how cunningly the devill plots against it;

By suggesting pride to our understanding;

8. O the danger that these souls are in! and how hardly are they cured? by reason that the pride of the *Understanding* is far more perillous than that of the *Will*: For hee

Which is far more dangerous, and more difficulty cu-

red, than that of the Will.

that is proud onely in *Will*, omits not all obedience, but ſubmits his judgement ſometimes to others, which he preferres before his own, and beleeves it to be better: But he that is puffed up with the pride of his *Underſtanding*, and aſſuredly believes his own opinion to be better than that of others; ah! what hope is there of his cure? How ſhall he be brought to ſubmit to anothers judgement, when as he thinkes himſelf the wiſer man? For when the *Underſtanding* (which is the ſouls eye, and ſhould both ſee and correct its ſecret pride,) is it ſelf blind, and blowne up with preſumption; when light it ſelf is become darkneſſe, and the very Rule crooked, thou eaſily conceiveſt what followes, and what the end of thoſe things is like to bee, which depend upon ſuch principles. Wherefore take timely care to prevent this pride, before it pierce thee to the marrow; yeeld not up the reins to thy *underſtanding*, but ſubject it to counſell, and ſubmit thine owne ſenſe to others judgements; become a *foole* in thy own conceit for the love of thy Lord,

and

and by this means thou ſhalt bee wiſer than *Salomon*.

Chap. V.

Of the Will: and the end, to which we are to direct all our actions.

IF thou deſireſt *(ô dearly beloved)* to become one ſpirit with thy Lord God, 'tis not enough to have a pious and prompt will to doe good works; but even that good thou doeſt, muſt (by his divine help and motion) be totally referred to Gods honour, and to pleaſe him onely. In this thou muſt look to have a ſtrong conflict with thine own nature, which in all her actions and omiſſions ſeeks her own commodity and complacence, eſpecially in things ſpirituall: Hence it is, that when any good thing is propoſed to be performed as from Gods will and pleaſure, ſhee readily undertakes to perform it; but yet not as a thing pleaſing to God, or propoſed by him, but rather becauſe ſhe conſiders the commodities and content which man reaps by doing the will of God.

1. A will to do well, ſufficeth not:

But our actions muſt be performed only to pleaſe God.

Which that thou maist attain to,

2. Wherfore, to the end thou maist wrest thy selfe out of this dangerous snare of the Devil, and pernicious stumbling-block cast in the way of perfection; and by degrees get a custome to doe or not to doe, because God will have it so, and with an intention to please him only (who should be the entrance and end of all our actions;) listen diligently to these following advices.

Apply thy *understanding* to Gods will,

3. When a thing is presented unto thee to bee performed, which is agreeable to the divine *Will*: first lift up thy *Understanding* unto God before thou applyest thy *Will* to execute it; thus thou shalt clearly discern, that it is his divine pleasure thou shouldest perform it; and that thou shouldst doe it solely for his Honour and good liking: And that thy *Will* is drawn and moved by the divine *will* to effect this work for this onely end and intention, because God will have it so, for the honour and glory of his own most sacred Majesty.

And take heed of being deceived;

4. So likewise, when thou wouldst omit or refuse the things not willed by God; resolve not rashly upon

on this omission; untill thou hast directed the eye of thy *Understanding* to the divine will (as is even now declared.) And take particular care over thy self, left thou bee deceived; because it may many times seem to thee that thou actest or omittest this or that, for Gods will and pleasure, when indeed it is otherwise; for nature doth so secretly seek her selfe in our enterprizes, that those very things, which thou thinkest please or displease thee onely for the love of God, are principally willed or refused for thy self-interest.

because nature is subject to seek herself.

105. Wherefore in the very entrance into any action whatsoever, dispoile thy selfe to the utmost of thy power, of all intentions which hath the least mixture of this proper interest: nor doe thou adventure to act or omit any thing, till thou feelest and findest thy selfe inwardly moved, to begin and go on with it, for Gods onely will and pleasure.

6. But if thou wanteſt time and leisure to make this *intention*, and to ponder the causes moving thee to doe or omit every work, take

This intention of doing all for God, is to be alwaies

made in the enterance to any work.

care to do it when occasion gives thee permission; and then from thy intention, to seek onely Gods good pleasure and honour in each one of thy actions and omissions: Now in other affaires, which admit of more deliberation, let this formall and expresse *intention* be made at the beginning of thy putting hand unto them: as also in things of longer durance, this intention is to be often renewed; lest after right beginning, some crooked intention may chance to creepe into thy mind: And thus thou maist shun the secret deceits of thine own Nature, which is too prone to seek her-self, and to invert thy well-made intentions, and in stead of Gods honour, strike in for her own interest.

And to be renewed in the progresse of it,

Left self-love creep in, and so change & corrupt it.

7. So that a champion who is not very vigilant in this doubtfull fight, may (as you see) often begin good works, and intend to perform them punctually according to the divine will & liking; and yet afterwards, almost unawares, the same works may begin to please himself so much for his own sake, that he may wholly forget Gods glory and honour. And

thus

thus by little and little he may become so changed, bewitched, and abstracted, with the pleasure, profit, and honour, redounding to himself from these works; that if these private conveniencies chance to be abstracted, by means of sickness or other accidents, whatsoever, hee presently remains much troubled, contristated, and disquieted; nor can he without great difficulty be drawn to his first pure *Intention*, of doing what God would have him for his only divine honour and glory.

Explication.

WHence it manifestly appeares, that he acted not as moved by God, nor was his *intention* purely for God: For whosoever followes Gods motion, and desires to satisfie him alone, fixeth not his affection upon one thing more than another, but is ready to have this, doe that, or leave the other thing, in what manner, time, and circumstance it pleaseth God: So that he remains in such an indifferency, that

He that doth all things purely to please God, remains in perfect indifferency.

whether he hath it, or hath it not, he is equally pleased and pacified, alwayes quiet and content; because however it falls out, he hath what he desires, and enjoyes the end he aimed at, which was no other, than to be conformable to his Lord God.

And hath alwayes what he desires.

Text. Therefore this right intention is of high importance.

8. In all thy actions therefore, and omissions, carefully cherish this right *Intention*; for it is not to be expressed, what strength, efficacy and comfort it will afford thee; in so much as the very least and meanest thing thus performed, (*to please God, and for the honour of his name,*) are of more merit and higher value in his sight, than the most heroicque works which are done without it.

Explication.

9. This purity of intention may be kept even in things aiming at our own good.

But if sometimes the disposition of thy soul seems to call upon thee to act any good thing which points more directly at thy own good than Gods onely glory; [as, *To avoid eternall punishment, or to obtain the blisse of Paradice*:] Yet

even

And it puts such a worth upon our actions,

That the best action without it is lost, and may be sinfull: And the smallest action with it is most acceptable to God.

10. This exercise, (*of accommodating all our actions purely and onely to please God*, to sigh alwaies after God, to seek God in every thing we doe or omit, and to aspire perpetually to God with lively and lovely affections, as to our most amiable and only good, which deserves in himselfe that all rationall creatures should honour, serve, and love him above all other things,) may seem at first very difficult, but use will render it facile; and the frequent consideration of Gods infinite worth, will so inflame the Wil in the production of the aforesaid acts of fervour and affection, that we shall with much ease and speed get a habit of doing all things for his onely sake and respect, who only deserves it. To which also the ensuing reflexions upon our own obligations to do it, will not a little conduce.

If this exercise seem hard at first, yet use will render it easie,

And soon beget a habit in our soules;

11. For who can choose but be perswaded to search and will Gods pure honour, with an intire resignation to the ordinances of his divine providence in all things, if he often call to his remembrance, how much he hath first honoured and loved him?

Especially if we consider,

How dearly our Lord hath loved us.

him? As in our *Creation*, hee made us of nothing to be like himself, and produced all other creatures in order to our service: In our *Redemption*, he sent no Angel, but his onely Son to pay our ransome, not by the corruptible value of gold and silver, but by the infinite price of his own precious bloud, and by his doloreus and disgracefull death. In our *Preservation*, each houre and moment, fighting our battails for us against our enemies, preventing and accompanying us with his heavenly grace, and leaving with us his deare Sonne, alwaies ready for our support and sustenance in the *Holy Sacrament of the Altar*. These verily and many more, are evident tokens of the high price he puts upon our meanesse and misery, and of the love which our great Creatour beers to us his poore and caitif creatures; and are in themselves such inestimable benefits, that none but his own divine understanding is capable to comprehend the least thereof: And how much then are we bound in exchange, to doe for so excellent a Majesty, who hath done such

Which appears in our Creation, Redemption,

Preservation,

And many other benefits,

Which are so great, that none but God himselfe can comprehend them.

such things for us? For if worldly Potentates, receiving honour from private persons of lowest rank, think themselves bound to return them reciprocall honour, what ought our vilenesse endeavour towards the supreme Monarch of the Universe, who so highly courts and cherisheth us.

Chap. VI.

Of a two-fold Will in man; and the continual fight between them.

2. Wills. Rationall, and Sensuall.

THou must take notice (*my dearly beloved,*) of two *Wills* in man: The one of *Reason*, which is therefore called Rationall and superiour; The other of *Sense*, and so is named Sensual, inferiour; and sometimes, sensuality, appetite, concupiscence, flesh, passion, and the like. And though each one of these is in man; yet because the use of Reason truly makes us and denominates us men, wee should never own any thing, which our meere sensuality dictates, till our superiour and *rationall Will* gives her joint consent.

2. From

2. From this diverſity ſprings all our ſpirituall conflict: For our ſuperiour *will* and Reaſon being middled between Gods Will, which is above it, and our Senſuality, which is under it, ſtill tempting and enticing it to naughtineſſe: therefore both of them, that is, Gods Will and our own Senſuality, ſtrive to get this our rationall *Will*, to ſide with them, and ſometimes *that*, othertimes *this*, renders her ſubject and obedient to them.

The Rationall is ſeated between Gods grace, and our ſenſe.

3. But this battail is of no great difficulty to them who are either truly vertuous, or downright vitious. For they who are vertuous, come no ſooner to the knowledg of Gods holy will, but they preſently yield their conſent, and bridle their bruiſh ſenſuality: And the wicked do contrarily according to their appetite, checking the diving will which contradicts it. *They* therefore chiefly feele the brunt of this battail, (eſpecially at firſt,) who have been great ſinners, and are now reſolved upon amendment, and to this end ſever themſelves from worldly and fleſhly delights, the better to love and ſerve

And the truly vertuous perſons yield promptly to Gods will,

And the vitious to their ſenſuality.

But they who of sinners are become converts have the greatest conflict;

serve their Lord *Jesus Christ* for the future. For the inward feeling and strokes of Gods will, which their *Reason* receives from above; and the cruel contradictions and adverse motion of their *Sensuality*, which it must necessarily suffer from below; are so powerfull on each side, that the poor *Reason* is between them both brought into extreme straits and perplexities.

Who must therefore resolve to beare patiently the losse of their pleasures.

4. Wherefore let none think to gain the victory, who is not instructed, prepared, and resolved to support patiently all such pains, as he shall endure in leaving his past pleasures: For this surely seems one of the chief causes why so few attain to true perfection; because, feeling grief and trouble in the beginning of their conversion, and in the quitting of their depraved affections and desires, they stand not fast to their resolutions, but yield to their enemies, who treacherously invade them, not making manlike resistance with the sword of *Reason*; but rather like cowardly souldiers, they skulke away, throw downe their armes, yield themselves to

the

the mercy of their enemies, and become againe their bondslaves who will now more than formerly tyrannize over them.

EXPLICATION.

AND amongst these, one may pick out some, who indeed neither take away, nor detaine their neighbours goods wrongfully; but yet have their affections fixt excessively upon them which they possesse justly: so likewise they will not purchase honours unlawfully, but they love and desire them passionately. They will keep the commanded fastings punctually, but care not to mortifie their gluttony. They will live continently, but are loath to leave pleasing company, which hinders their union with God, and greatly retards them in their tendance to perfection: From all which, and the like petty affections, it follows, that their good works are performed with a certain irksomnesse of mind, and are accompanyed with divers self-interests, and secret imperfections, yea with self-

Divers sorts of unmortified souls.

Whose affections are accompanied with much imperfection.

self-conceit and good liking of their own actions, and with a longing desire to be liked and loved by others: But all these, not only make no progresse in the way of spirituality, but even return backwards, and are in eminent hazard to fall into their former follies; because they are neither inamoured with true vertue, nor gratefull to their loving Creatour, who hath freed them from the tyranny of the Devil: They are moreover strucken with Ignorance and blindnesse, since they neither understand nor see their own danger, but falsly and foolishly fancy themselves to be in a state of security.

And who make no progresse in spirituality.

But are full of ignorance and blindnesse.

Text. A danger in the choice of spirituall exercises discovered.

5. And here thou mayst perceive a very perilous and pernicious deceit, wch very few take true notice of: For many beginners in a spirituall course, out of self-love make choice of such *exercises* as are most pleasing to themselves, rather than most profitable unto their soules: when as indeed, they ought to begin with the knowledg of their own natural affections, and the naughty desires of their *sensuality*; and to make their

first

first and fiercest encounter with these enemies; and so long falling on and following this fight, till they be entirely subdued to Reasons Empire, as fare forth as in this life is possible.

Chap. VII.

Of the fight against Sensuality: and of the inward way of the Will, to acquire Vertues.

As often as thou feelest thy self assaulted by the motions of thy *Sensuality*, convert thy minde quickly to thy Lord God, and resist manfully: And that thou maist become a conqueror in this combat, furnish thy self with these severall wayes and wards against thy foes.

1. When Sensuality rebels:

First, let the temptation be no sooner felt in the senses, but that thou forthwith put a precept of obedience upon the *Superiour Will* or Reason, that it yield no consent unto it. In the next place, when thou hast happily vanquished and discomfited any such temptation; excite

1. Look presenly to thy reason that it cosent not.
2. Recall that motion again and again, and as often conquer it.

excite the same againe in thy self, and again repell it with the like fervour. Yea, do it yet again and again, that so often thou maist have occasion more zelously to hate it, to reject it, to contemn it: And this way is to be used against all temptations, and unruly affections of thy *Sensuality*; except onely what concerns *carnality*: whereof hereafter in its due place.

3. Produce acts of those vertues which are contrary to these vices.

3. *Lastly*, let it be thy exercise to produce frequent and fervent acts of those vertues which are contrary to the temptations of these vices: For example: Art thou tempted to *impatience*? Recall thy mind home into its inner roome, and thou shalt there perceive, that this temptation to impatience, doth incessantly strive and fight with thy Superiour Will or Reason, to terrify and drive it out of the field, or incline it to consent: Therefore thou must contradict and resist the said temptation with redoubled fervor of thy Reason; and never leave off this resistance, till thou seest thine enemy conquered at thy feet, and become thy Captive.

4. Yet

4. Yet here thou art to be adver- But be-
ized, that our enemy perceiving us ware of
constantly and continually to op- thy cun-
pose our selves against his suggesti- ning ene-
on, passions and affections, ceaseth my, who
sometimes (out of his treacherous sometimes
cunning) from stirring them up: suppres-
And which is more, when they are seth these
raised, he sometimes suppresseth motions.
them; least by the frequent fight of
our Reason against them, we should
get the habit of those vertues
which are opposite to those passi-
ons.

5. It imports thee therefore to For then it
be weary, that thou letteſt not slip is thy part
this occasion of acquiring these ver- to excite
tues: And if thou hast made a truce them.
with thy foe, and art at peace
with thy passions; yet reduce into
memory thy past and overcome
temptations; and excite the ill sug-
gestions which have formerly mo-
lested thee, yea and carry thy selfe so
towards them, as if thou seemedst to
consent, and yield them the victory:
And with all marke the motives, ar-
guments, & reasons suggested by thy
enemie; examin what he aimes at,
what he would have of thee, and

to

to what thou art inclined; and when thou seest thy Sensitive part stirred up, and evill thoughts ascending, encreasing, and almost domineering over thy Reason, which is even readie to give her consent; Then draw back thy foot, and violently excite good thoughts in thy soul in opposition to those evill suggestions, boldly denying them further entrance or longer continuance. And fight the battail over and over, so often and so long, till thou feelest in thy self, that thou art now a conquerour of thy selfe.

And to fight afresh with them,

Till thou getteſt a perfect hatred against them.

6. But we must yet furthermore take notice, that though we have gallantly fought, and happily foyled our enemies; we are in no security, till we *hate* them perfectly. And to excite, encrease, and perfect this our due hatred against them, we must so often (as aforesaid) stir them up, and provoke them to the combat, thereby to take occasion of contemning, despising, and abhorring them, (that is our evil *affections*,) with the greater indignation; till we at length come to have a true and constant hatred against them.

4. Now

7. Now, for the adorning of thy soul with vertues, the former fights and exercises against unruly passions, and evil affections, suffice not; but thou must frequently and fervently undertake the practice of those affections, and acts of those vertues, which are contrary to those now-extirpated passions, and overcome vices. As thus: One gives thee occasion of *impatience*: It is not enough for thee to conquer and quell this motion according to the now-delivered doctrine; but thou shouldst moreover desire, that the same person may, in the same manner, more & more move and molest thee; yea, thou shouldst force thy self to feele content in that trouble; and make resolutions to suffer more of the like nature, or greater of any other: And which is yet above all this, thou must constrain thy self to converse lovingly, speake sweetly, serve cordially that very person, whose occasion thus moves thee to impatience.

And the way to plant vertues, is to practice acts contrary to these defects.

EXPLI-

Explication.

The reason why such contrary acts are so necessary,

THe reason why such contrary acts are necessary to perfect our vertue; is, for that the root from which the vice buds forth, can by no other acts so fully be extirpated. Therefore, (to continue in the same example,) although when we are sleighted and contemned, we yield not to the motions of *impatience*, but beat it down with the three forementioned weapons; yet if we habituate not our selves to make this contempt pleasing unto us, and to rejoice therein, we shall never be freed and exempt from the vice of *impatience*; which (by reason of our naturall proneness to seek the encrease of our particular reputation,) is founded in the abhorring of all contempt: And so long as this vitious root remains alive, it will be still putting forth, and make our vertue languish and droop, yea and sometimes choak it up: besides, that it puts us to perpetuall danger of relapses upon all occasions which are represented unto us: whence it is clear, that without the practice of such

Is, for that whilst the root of vice remains alive in us, it will still bud forth, and choak up our plants of vertue.

such contrary acts, we can never obtain the true habits of vertues. And you are further to be instructed, that these acts must be so fervent, frequent, and numerous, that they may be capable to destroy totally the vicious habit; which having got the possession of our heart by many vicious acts, must be thence extracted by many acts of contrary nature, that the desired vertuous habit may be let in and implanted. Yea, I moreover advertise you, that more *good acts* are required to obtain a habit of vertue, than vicious acts to get the habit of vice, because those are not assisted, (as these are,) by nature corrupted with sin. I add to all this, that if the vertue which you practise, requires it, you are to make *outward acts* conformable to the inward: as, (in the aforesaid subject,) you must use words of love and sweetnesse; and strive to find out, and lay hold on some occasion, of serving him, whom you take for your opposite and enemy.

Therefore we must make many acts, contrary to the vicious habit,

That we may implant the habit of vertue:

And these acts must be externall as wel as internall.

8. And although these practises are full of pain, and seeme to be so coldly

Text. Which is indeed full of paine, but very full of profit.

coldly performed by thee, that thou perceivest them to goe against the haire, yea omit them not in any case: For if they are painfull, they are also profitable; making thee valiant and bold to fight these holy battails, & preparing thy way to the victory.

And this diligence must be used al so against the least evill motions,

9. Thou art moreover to be advertized, that not only these great and grievous temptations, and manifest wickednesses, are to be stoutly resisted; but even the least and lightest passions and disordered motions: For these are but forerunners of the greater, opening the doore for them to steale in upon us and oppresse us at unawares, and so to precipitate us into all vices: And it oftentimes falls out with them, who sleight these petty temptations, and care not to use diligence in resisting them: that when they afterwards least suspect it, much more grievous suggestions do suddainly, violently, and dangerously invade them.

Yea, and against lawfull affections, when they are not absolutely necessary.

10. Lastly, thou must also resolve to skirmish with thy *lawfull affections*, and deny thy selfe even in thy honest desires, when they appear not to be necessary: For this will render thee

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an experienced soldier in this spirituall warfare, and a most gratefull servant to thy Lord and Saviour.

11. And now I tell thee plainly, (my dear lyke beloved) If thou wilt try and train up thy self (in thy ghostly quarrell,) according to this prescribed method; thou shalt soone feel, (Gods grace assisting thee,) a happy and totall change into spirituality. But if thou wilt needs follow other exercises, though seeming most excellent, and performed with such present gust and sweetnesse, as if thou hadst the full and familiar conference and company of thy Crucified *Jesus*: never perswade thy selfe, that such delicious wayes, are the direct path to perfection. For this is the way to become truly spirituall.

12. For as our vices spring from this fountain, that our superiour Will or Reason submits her selfe to the inferiour feelings of Sensuality: So on the contrary, Vertues are ingenerated in our souls, by due submission of this Will to the divine Will; and as our will can never be truly good and gratefull to God, (though it receive from him never so holy and heavenly inspirations, and be driven by Because all vice springs from the yielding to sense,

And all vertue by subduing and submitting our Will to Gods,

by the impulse of his Will to all its works and omissions) unlesse it consent to the divine operations within it self; so it cannot be tearmed bad, and separated from God, though never so much tempted and troubled by the Sensuality, but only by consenting unto it.

Chap. VIII.

What he must do who feels his Superiour Will or Reason, overcome by his inferiour Will or Sensuality.

1. IF thou sometimes findest (*ô dearly beloved*) that thou prevailest nothing at all in the fight of thy *Reason* against sense; because thou feelest not an efficacious ardour to root out ill affections; Be not troubled, but stand fast, and still pursue thy fight with courage and constancy: For as long as thy *Reason* keeps her selfe from consenting to these motions of *Sensuality*, so long thou hast the better in this battaile, and art master of the field.

As long as thy Reason consents not to Sensuality, fear not.

2. Nor is it necessary that all thy affections and motions of Sensuali-

ty

ty do entirely submit to thy Reasons empire; neither doth our victory consist, in feeling no perverse passions in our Sensuality: But it sufficeth, that our Will and Reason (though Sensuality storm never so much) can alwaies act or omit, doe or not doe, will or desire, when, how, where, and as shee pleaseth: In so much as the Devill himselfe, and the whole world together, can never alter this our resolution.

For victory consists not in feeling no motions, but in not yielding.

3. And if it sometimes happen, that thy enemies suddainly and violently rush in upon thee; and so surprize thy Reason, as to give it no respite to have recourse to such wonted wayes of devotion, whereby it might suppresse these motions: Then briefly make use of thy tongue, and say: *No, no, I beleeve thee not, I will none of thee, I will never consent into thee.* And so behave thy selfe in this exigent against thy inward foes, as one would do being oppressed unawares with outward enemies: For his sword prooving useless in his defence, he strives to step backwards, that so he may get ground and time both to draw his sword, and also to

But if thy enemies surprise thy reason,

drive his enemy away thererwith: And do thou in like sort, O spirituall champion; first give back, thereby to gain time to think upon thy nothing, and that of thy self thou canst never conquer thy cruell enemies: And then buckling up thy self with hope and confidence in thy God, who can do all things, make a gallant assault upon thine enemy; saying, *Lord help me, O my God give succour to thy servant; O Jesu, O Mary, the most worthy Mother of my Redeemer, deliver me from this danger.*

Then give back to gaine time and strength.

4. But if thou hast time to breath upon it, then thou mayst support thy Will from consenting and yeilding, by the succour of thy Understanding: fetching strength from the *Consideration* of those means, which may help her against her enemies: As for example; If a great and grievous *Impatience* hath laid hold on thee, (by reason of some accident or affliction,) in so much that it seems more than thou wilt or canst doe to beare or dissemble it any longer; help thy selfe presently with these following thoughts.

And if thou hast time, help thy selfe with consideration,

5. *First*, whether or no thou hast any

First, whether thou

any way deserved, or given just occasion, that this adversity should befall thee? If so, rest contented, be no longer troubled; for it is most just and equitable, that thou patiently beare the blow given to thy selfe, by thine owne hands? But if not; Then turne thine eyes to thy other sinnes, for which neither thy loving Lord hath yet chastised thee as thou deservest, nor thou afflicted thy selfe as thou ought'st; And thence conclude,

hast deserved this affliction.

If so, rest contented.

If not, think on thy former sinnes not yet fully punished.

Secondly, That thy mercifull and mercifull master, hath exchanged either the eternall paine, which thou shou'dst have endured in Hell-fire, or else the temporall punishment, due to thee in Purgatory, into this easie and fatherly correction? And what then is more reasonable, than that thou embrace it, not only with a willing mind, but also with a grateful acknowledgment for so bountifull a benefit?

Thirdly, But if thou thinkest (which God forbid thou shouldest) that thou hast done sufficient penance for thy petty-offences: then rest to with thy selfe, that none can enter

Yea, though they were; yet selfe-denial and sufferance is the way to heaven.

enter the heavenly Kingdome, but they must passe through the narrow gate of selfe-deniall, and of patience in tribulation; for thus Gods holy Sonne himselfe, and all his blessed Saints ascended to their glory.

And if there were another way, yet thy duty to God binds thee to chuse this,

7. *Fourthly*; Nay, put case thou couldst find out some other way to get to heaven; yet thou art obliged by the law of love, and duty, not to doe nor desire it: For the Sonne of God chose the way of thorns and crosses by which he would enter into his glory; and this for thy love, and that thou shouldst imitate him, who left thee this exact pattern of perfect patience.

As being most gratefull and pleasing to his Majesty.

8. *Lastly*, know for certain, that amongst all the pious motives and meditations, which thou makest use of in these or the like events and necessities, for the comfort and confirmation of thy Will; this seems to be one of the most efficacious: To think what a joy and content it is to thy Lord God, how he likes and loves thee, when he beholds thee fight so stoutly for his sake. For nothing surely can be more gratefull to thy Creatour, than that thou kill, and cut up

by

by the root all depraved desires, and plant true vertues in their places, and this meerely for that thou well knowest it to be his holy Will and pleasure.

CHAP. IX.

That we must not shun the occasions of these combats.

AND now (*my dearly beloved*) I adde to all these meanes hitherto mentioned for the acquisition of vertues, this as a short and certain memoriall: That thou neither feare nor fly, the offered occasions of fighting against thy passions. For if thou art desirous to have the habit of any vertue, (as of *Patience*, for example,) thy way is not to shut thy selfe up from conversing with men, or to shun those things, (whether words, actions, or cogitations) which move thee to *Impatience*. No, thou must not shun them, I say, but seeke them out, desire them, and love their company and conversation who are the causes of this thy disquiet. And as often as thou shalt have occasion of in-

1. The way to get true vertue, is not to avoid, but to seek the occasions of combat.

As for example, to get Patience shun not the company,

intercourse with them, prepare thy selfe, and make ready thy Will to receive joyfully and endure patiently all tribulations and troubles, which they can any way bring upon thee. And this is thy onely way to accustome thy selfe to *Patience*.

Or the imployment which is tedious to thee.

2. In like manner, If thou art weary of any work, which growes tedious and troublesome unto thee; (either for that the person who commands it displeaseth thee, or because it is of it selfe offensive, or that thou art thereby hindred from some other employment, which thou wouldst more willingly embrace) yet omit it not upon any termes, but rather set sooner upon that work than any other, be it never so painfull or displeasing: And although the leaving it undone seems to settle and quiet thy mind, yet still see thou desist not from doing it: For thus thou shalt become more and more instructed in the way to get perfect *Patience*. Nor is that supposed quiet, at all solid, because it springs not from a heart sincerely purified from all disorderly passion.

And the same rule

3. And I teach the same lesson, con-

is to be applied to troublesome thoughts.

Yet a young Scholar, must be wary in waging this war;

But never desert the field.

patience,

patience, yet he gets no ſtrength or conſtancy of heart, againſt the next riſing motions thereof.

For then he will ſtil be unprovided.

5. Whence it followes, that if the ſame Sergeants of *Impatience* doe at another time, ſeize on him; he is ſoone terrified, and quickly conquered; becauſe he was unprovided of armes convenient for the combate; that is, he had not fortified his mind, with cuſtomes, counſells, thoughts, and reſolutions to keepe perfect *patience* in all events of Adverſity.

This way is uſefull againſt all imperfections, carnality onely excepted.

And this way of warring, is very profitable, not onely againſt *Impatience*, but all other Imperfections; (the *carnall ſtill excepted*;) whereof ſhall be hereafter treated.

CHAP. X.

Of the Fight againſt ſuddaine temptations and paſſions.

1. HE that is not yet accuſtomed to receive ſuddaine adverſities and troubles with a calme countenance and quiet mind, may thus enure himſelfe thereto: Let him firſt diligently

diligently consider them with his *Understanding*, then earnestly desire them with his *Will*, and finally always expect them with a ready, resolute and prepared *Minde*.

2. The manner to ponder such adversities by the Understanding is this: Mark thine owne state, calling and condition, as also the place and persons where and with whom thou art like daily to converse: thus thou maist easily foresee what may probably befall thee, and how thou must carry thy selfe, and fortifie thy mind, against any suddain surprisall of thy passions. And if some accident not foreseen chance to happen, then besides this former strength already gained by that first resolution to bear all crosse events with an evenneſſe of mind, thou maist thus farther help thy selfe.

First, thou art to ponder them in thy understanding, And foresee what is like to befall thee.

3. When thou perceivest that thou art sleighted, scorned or any way injured; presently enforce thy mind towards thy Lord and maker, and weigh his immense bounty and infinite love to thee: from which thought it will forthwith occure to thy understanding, that he is the chief

But if some other crosse happens not foreseene; fly to the thoughts of Gods love and providence,

chiefe cause of this thy trouble and tribulation; and that he expresly permits it to befall thee, that thou maist learne to beare it patiently for his love, and so maist draw neater, and be more perfectly united unto him.

4. And after thou hast thus concluded with thy selfe, that it is his divine will and pleasure thou shouldest suffer it patiently, then reflect thy thoughts backe upon thy selfe, and begin to chide thy soule, and tell it: *Ah, why strivest thou to cast off that crosse, which neither this nor that enemy, but thy most loving Lord, and heavenly Father hath laid upon thy shoulders?* Then turne to the Crosse or calamity which presseth thee, salute it, praise it, embrace it, and receive it with all possible joy and alacrity.

Who sends it, or permits it,

5. And although the rising passions be so unruly and violent, that they suffer not thy mind to elevate it selfe to God, but leave thee wounded and almost vanquished; yet persevere in thy well-made resolution, and proceed on as if thou hadst not worsted in the skirmish.

And be constant though almost conquered.

6. But

But amongst all the remedies against these sudden and unexpected motions, this seems most effectuall; To take away timely the cause from whence they proceed: As, If thou feelest thy mind much troubled, when thou canst not obtain such a thing, which thou affectest: presently, away with that love to it, exclude that thing from thy mind. But if thy trouble and vexation ariseth not from the thing, but from the person who hinders, helps, or procures it; and this party is so highly displeasing to thy humour, that the least thing as comming from him is troublesome to thee; then the speediest and best remedy is to conquer thine owne inclination, and compell thy will to yeeld him true love and affection.

But the best remedy against suddaine motions, is to cut off their causes.

EXPLICATION.

FOr besides that he is a Creature, framed as thou art, by the Allpowerfull hand of God; and redeemed by the same precious ransome of thy dear Saviours blood; he further may be presents thee with a happy occasion, (if thou canst love it,) and lay

lay hold thereon,) to make thy selfe even like God, who is good and gracious to all.

Chap. XI.

Of the fight against our flesh, and fleshly concupiscence.

1. In this war, thou must change thy weapon; And therefore, Before the temptation assailes thee, call it not; But avoid all occasions of procuring it, Which are five, 1. Conversation.

IN this warre with thy flesh, (*ô my dearly beloved*) thou must change thy weapon, and fight in a new posture, contrary to the former. And therefore thou art to take particular notice of *three times*: to wit, the time *going before* the temptation, *accompanying* it, and *following* it.

2. Before thou feelest the temptations of this kinde, fight not with them, but diligently fly the occasions; and cut off all causes which procure them: As *First*, all conversation, though never so little dangerous.

Explication.

BEcause this enemy is not to be affronted, but avoided by all possible meanes, and we are to dread the

the incounter of any person whatsoever, whose presence may put us in the least danger; nor are we to trust our not feeling presently the stings of the temptation, for this accursed vice makes its approaches most commonly by stealth and under hand, and hurts us by so much the more grievously by how much it pretends truce and amity, whereby we neither distrust its treachery, nor stand upon our guards to defend our selves vigorously: So that there is oftentimes more cause of fear, when the haunt & familiarity is continued under the *pretext of lawfulnesse*, as of kindred, of obligation, of compliance, or even of vertue in the party beloved; for then the poysonous pleasure of our sensuality, intermixeth it selfe with this affection, (which is in its owne nature good and holy) and insensibly distilling into the heart and penetrating by little and little into the very marrow of the soule, at last darkens and obscures the Reason; till it be brought to sleight all dangers, and so by degrees fall either into open ruine, or at least into such troublesome temptations, which are afterwards

This enemy assailes us sometimes by stealth.

And under the pretext of lawfulnesse, &c.

But sensuality may mix it self with thy affection, and ruine thy soule.

wards very hard to be conquered.

Text. *Secondly*, All pleasant aspects
2. Aspects. upon any such persons or things, all shew of familiarity, all loving Salutation, all pressing of their hands with thine, or the like levities: But if thou hast some affaire which must necessarily be transacted with such a one, dispatch it with all speed and gravity. *Thirdly*, Take heed of idlenesse,
3. Idlenesse. and take a particular and perpetuall care, never to act or think any thing unbeseeming thy state and vocation.
4 Disobedience. *Fourthly*, Be punctuall in obeying thy Superiour, never contradict him in any thing, but be ever ready to
5. Vain-Complicency. execute his command. *Fifthly*, Judge not rashly of thy neighbour concerning this vice: yea, though his sinne be manifest, and cannot admit of any excusation; doe thou condole with him, but neither disdaine nor despise him. And turning his imperfection to thy owne profit, humble and contemne thy selfe; debase thy selfe even to the dust, and trembling with awfull feare, beg heartily the divine assistance, that thou be not likewise tempted, lest thou likewise fall. For,

if

if thou art ready to judge and sleighe others, God will punish thee to thy cost, and permit thee to fall into the same vice, that so thou maist learne truly to know and humble thy selfe, and suppresse thy owne pride and presumption: For if thou art proud and fallest not, thy Salvation is much to be doubted of. *Lastly*, mark seriously, and beware of vaine-complacence in thy selfe, upon the feeling of any sensible grace, or spirituall comfort; or inward delight in devotion, perswade not thy selfe that thou art therefore more perfect, or that thou shalt be hereafter have no occasion to fight withall; but remaine still carefull, and ever fearefull.

3. In the time *accompanying* thy temptations; weigh whether they proceed from an externall or internall cause: by externall causes are commonly understood, conversation, speeches, reading, or whatsoever may provoke to this vice: against which the onely, present, and perfect remedy, is to omit all such exercises and fly from these occasions: For there is no fighting with these temptations, as is aforesaid, but the best security

In the time of temptation, mark the cause of it; whether externall, and fly from it,

rity is to fly far from them, leſt they infect thy ſoule with their contagion: By inward cauſes are meant, either the body which is over full of ſap and ſtrength: Or the mind, which is infeſted with filthy thoughts, comming either from our owne evill cuſtomes, and neglect of our ſenſes; or elſe from the enemies ſuggeſtion.

Or internall.

4. The *firſt* of theſe inward cauſes, which is from the body's fulneſſe, muſt be prevented with faſtings, haircloths, watchings, and the like chaſtiſements and auſterities, as Reaſon dictates, or Obedience directs. The *other* inward cauſes comming from filthy fancies, are beſt remedied by holy prayer, pious meditation, diligent labour, and continuall employment, in affaires convenient for thy ſtate.

And prevent it by fit chaſtiſements of the body,

And by hearty prayer,

Explication.

THy *Prayer* may be made in this or the like manner; When thou firſt apprehendeſt the approach of the enemy comming to aſſault thee with ſuch fancies, recurre ſodainly to the ſacred Crucifix, ſaying, *O my Jeſu,*

Jesu, my sweet Jesu, succour me with speed, that I be not subdued, and embracing the Crosse with thy Saviour upon it, kisse and cherish againe and againe his holy feet, and speak with heart and affection: *O blessed wounds, ô chast and comfortable wounds, ô sacred and sugred wounds! wound this wretched and unworthy heart of mine with thy pure and perfect love, and free it from these present and pressing motions of impurity,* &c.

But I would not advise thee to choose such points of meditation, which many spirituall bookes prescribe for remedy of these temptations: which are, to consider, First, the fowlnesse of carnall vices, & their insatiableness: Then the great shame and danger which must of necessity accompany them; and lastly, the losse of fame, and consumption of goods; temporall discontents, and eternall damnation: For though these are good mediations, yet they are not conducing to the conquering of these temptations: For since that *Flight*, in the judgement of all, is the Soveraigne remedy against this dis-

Text. Yet not according as some books prescribe.

ease;

Which may give new occasions to impurity.

ease; therefore every such thing is to be avoided, which gives any occasion to impure cogitations: But in these forementioned meditations, howsoever the *understanding* tires it selfe in detesting these sins of carnality; yet at the same time, it fastens such fancies in the *memory*, that there are just grounds to feare the falling into delight thereof.

But by meditating on Christs death and passion.

5. Wherefore, let the matter of thy *meditations* for this purpose, be rather taken from the *passion and death of our Saviour Jesus*. And if evill temptations of that nature, doe also in these pious meditations intrude themselves (against thy Will) to trouble thee; and notwithstanding thy vigilancy, yet still drive on their plots, and invent new devices against thee; (which may perhaps befall thee as well as others) yet be not out of heart, nor leave off thy well begun meditations; nor stay to dispute with these flying thoughts; but proceed constantly in what thou art about, leaving and laughing at the other fancies, as if they nothing concerned thee. And this is the onely and best way to conquer impure

nor cogitations, though never so importunate and troublesome.

Explication.

AND thou maist conclude thy *meditation*, with this or some such colloquie: *O my soveraigne Creator and sweet Redeemer! disingage me from mine enemies for thy bitter passions sake*, &c. And be sure not to permit thy fancy to returne or reflect on the vice, since the onely *memory* thereof is accompanied with very much danger.

6. And take heed of holding any argument with them, whether thou hast yeelded thy consent or not; for this is a covert deceit of the Devill, who under this maske of good, lyes waiting to insnare thee, and bring thee into inconvenience. Which at another time, when thou enjoyest thy quiet, and art free from these troublesome temptations, will be easily perceived by thee, and taught thee by thy *ghostly Father* to whom thou art faithfully to discover all and every such thoughts, and not to be

Text. Dispute not with carnall temptations;

But discover them to thy Ghostly Father.

be asham'd: For *humility* is here mainly necessary, if we mean to compleat the victory.

And make no actuall and particular reflexions upon these temptations.

7. As concerning *holy Prayer* (another remedy against this carnall malady, and all other spiritual diseases) know, that it must be made with often lifting up thy mind to God, virtually intending to pray for victory over these thine enemyes without any actuall reflexion upon the temptations; Beware therefore of descending to particulars in thy prayers, or to shew as it were their malice, and thy misery, by reflecting upon speciall circumstances: for this may endanger thee to fall into new delectation. And this will suffice thee for thy defence in time of temptation.

After the temptation is past, stand upon thy guard.

8. And *after* the carnall temptation is past, think not that thou art presently safe and secure from the like assault: but stand upon thy guard, and doe not so much as ever remember those objects which occasioned thy temptations, though never so much disguised with the appearance of vertue or piety; For all this is a secret perswasion of our corrupted nature,

nature, and a craft of the Devill to insnare us, and allure us to delight.

Chap. XII.

How to fight against slackneſſe, and won negligence.

1. THat thou mayſt ſecure thy ſelfe, (*ô dearly beloved,*) from this pernicious vice; employ thy whole diligence and indeavours, to correſpond readily with all holy inſpirations, and to decline all earthly comforts, curioſities, and ſuperfluous affaires, not directly belonging to thy ſtate and calling.

Follow holy inſpirations ſpeedily.

Explication.

COncerning which prompt and ſpeedy correſpondency with Gods holy *inſpirations*, take this Rule: Be ſure not to deferre the enterpriſe and *beginning* of that thing (which thou art certainly ſatisfied thou oughteſt to do), in it's due and fit time: For I aſſure thee, this delay in the *beginning* of thy work, will prove an unrecoverable

To begin a good work ſpeedily, and in it's due time.

losse in the progresse thereof: because this first short lingring, calls on a second, which invites a third, and that is attended by another, and so thou wilt passe on to admit of more, to which thy sense will consent more easily than to the first, as having now tasted the bait, and swallowed down the seeming pleasure of this protraction: whence it follows, that thou either entrest upon thy exercise when 'tis too late, or wholly omittest it, because thou art totally disgusted therwith. Thus by litle and litle, and almost insensibly, creeps in this evill habit of *Negligence*, and in the end we content our selves with this conceit, that we will doe it another time more carefully and diligently. Take heed therefore of this most subtile enemy, *Negligence*, which not onely infects the *Will*, by making it abhor action; but also blinds the *Understanding* that it apprehends not the vanity of these ill-grounded maximes, to fancy the doing of our duty another time more devoutly and diligently, which we may now performe, and yet voluntarily leave it, or negligently delay it.

Is of great consequence to overcome sloath.

Where-

Wherefore having couragiously begun thy good work, continue it carefully, prosecute it diligently, and end it devoutly; yet not so hastily as to hurt or prejudice the perfection thereof, or to imitate the errour and idleness of them, who out of sloathfulness think upon nothing but to make a speedy end of what they have enterprised; litle caring to doe it well, but onely striving to dispatch it quickly, that they may the sooner enjoy their overmuch-desired quiet and repose.

And having couragiously set upon it, carefully prosecute the same.

2. And because there is no better remedy to recall one fallen into this sluggish vice, than thus to settle him to some good work; (though the sloathfull man, loaths all such employments; having more thought upon the labour, which he must undergoe, than the fruit which follows it:) Therefore this good must be discovered, and made apparent unto him; and he must be given to understand, that one hearty elevation of the mind to God, or one onely bending of the knee humbly to the earth for his honour, is more worth than

Text.

The fruit of good works must be discovered,

than all worldly wealth and treasures.

Explication.

And that as often as we make a diligent haſt to ſpeed a good work, by uſing a certaine force and violence to our ſelves, ſo often the holy Angels bring crowns of glorious victory from heaven to adorne our ſoules: and that God by litle and litle takes away from the tepid and negligent, thoſe graces which he had formerly given them, encreaſing them to his faithfull friends and followers.

Text. And as for the *paine* which is to be taken in the proſecution of vertuous practices; it muſt be ſo dexterouſly hid and diſguiſed from him, that it may ſeeme leſſe and lighter than it is. As; If thou ſhouldeſt perchance employ thy ſelfe in the exerciſe of pious meditation for the ſpace of *one whole houre*, and that ſeemes too long to thy lazy diſpoſition; uſe a pious fraude, and perſwade thy ſenſuality, that after *half a*

And the pains diſguiſed.

quarters

quarters time well ſpent in prayer, thou wilt preſently leave of: And againe when this ſhort ſpace is paſt, get thy body to have patience *a litle longer*, before thou ceaſeſt thy devotions; and thus continuing from ſpace to ſpace, the whole howre will ſoone be overpaſſed, and thy ſloath eaſily ſhaken of.

4. But if indeed thou findeſt a reall diſability of body, to beare ſuch labours; thou maiſt lawfully leave it off for a time; till by degrees, it becomes accuſtomed to performe theſe practices of piety, with more fervour and alacrity.

Unleſſe there be a reall diſability.

Explication.

5.

THis I tell thee, as condeſcending to thy ſloath and weakneſſe: But if thou wouldeſt habituate thy ſelfe to make all labour light, and all paines pleaſant; *the beſt*, though the moſt difficult way, is to get before it, expect it, & cheerefully embrace it at the firſt incounter; whence thou wilt find, that all tediouſneſs in the performance thereof wil be turned into perfect quiet & content, ſince what thou doſt,

But the beſt way to get a cuſtome of enduring, is to expect croſſes continually,

doſt, thou doſt voluntarily and willingly: whereas if on the contrary thou ſeekeſt to ſhun labour, it will not onely ſeeme irkſome when it comes to be performed, but formidable before-hand to thy apprehenſion; ſo that thy very quiet will be ſubject to trouble, and the feare of this ſurpriſall will continually alarme thy fancy; thou wilt abhor all painstaking, as a thing loathſome, and ſtill dread the occurrence of ſuch occaſions, perſons or objects, as are like to impoſe it upon thee.

And not to ſeek how to ſhun them.

6. Marvaile not that I ſo much preſſe this point, and inveigh againſt this vice of *Negligence*; I doe it, for that it is ſeldome perceived, and yet highly prejudiciall, becauſe it perſecutes and purſues us moſt ſecretly, and ſubtilly, it falls upon us not by force but flattery, it gnaws the very *root* of all *Spirituality*, and inſenſibly gangrens the marrow of our piety and devotion: And our enemy hath no better or more alluring bait to entice any one into his treacherous ambuſhes, eſpecially them who aime at ſpirituality: Be thou therefore vigilant, *(ô my dearly beloved,)* pray heartily,

Negligence, is highly prejudiciall to perfection,

And the moſt alluring bait of our enemy.

heartily, performe good works diligently, and delay not the spinning of the wooll for thy nuptiall robe, until the marriage day be come, when thou shouldest be ready and arrayed to goe before thy deare Spouse. Reflect, that thy God, who gave thee the morning, doth not promise thee an evening; therefore improve each moment to thy profit, and remember the strict account which will be exacted thereof. I conclude, and counsell thee to give *that day for lost*, (though thou hast dispatcht never so many affaires,) wherein thou hast gotten no victory over thy enemies, nor thanked God for his benefits.

Therefore take timely care to prevene it.

And account that day lost, in which thou hast done no good action.

Chap. XIII.

How to governe our Sensuality.

THy Sensuality (*ô dearly beloved*) is the ordinary gate whereby the Devill enters into thee; Let it be therefore thy chief care so to keep and curb it, that it may rather be a doore alwayes open to let in thy Lord God to thy Soule. Therefore in

1.

Keep thy heart disingaged from earthly creatures,

in all thy commerce with earthly creatures, be sure to have thy heart free and disingaged from them; and often elevating the eye of thy affection to thy God, looke upon him, hidden in that creature as in his own work: and then reflect, that thy same Lord and love, is within thee also; and thou maist begin to confer with him in this sort. *O my mercifull maker, and eternall Lord God; thou art ever present with mee; Thou art more within me than I am in my selfe: and I ungratefull and forgetfull wretch, remember thee not, love thee not, honour thee not.*

And contemplate thy creatours greatnesse;

2. At other times, elevate thy thoughts to the contemplation of Gods incomprehensible perfections; and rejoyce in those his goods, greatnesses, and glories, more than if they were all thine owne. And be more glad, that he is incomprehensible in his Majesty, than if he were within the reach of thy understanding and capacity.

And reduce all created perfecti-

3. And when thou remarkest any main perfection, either of Grace or Nature, in any man or woman, (as wisdome, understanding,

piety,

piety, justice, and the like,) lift up thy selfe to him who is the bountifull bestower; and consider them not as they are in that creature, but reducing them to thy Lord God, say: *Behold these, ô my God, are rivulets flowing out of thee, the true, living, eternall and increate fountaine; these are the rewards of thy servants, issuing out of the immense Ocean of thy ineffable bounty.* on to him, the fountaine,

4. But when the beauty of any creature allures thee to any delight and complacency; passe presently from earthly beauty, to the thought of supernall glory, and therein onely taking pleasure, say: *O my God, When will the happy day come, that I shall take in thee onely my whole delight?* And all earthly beauty to heavenly glory.

5. Another remedy against such-like surprises of pleasure, may be; To ponder presently with thy understanding, how cunningly the Devill, (who onely seeks to kill, or at least to wound thy soule mortally,) lies lurking under this bait. Which when thou perceivest, tell him boldly: *Ah, thou cursed serpent, how craftily and covertly, dost thou lie in* Mark well the craft of the Devill.

wait, to infect me with thy poiſon? And then lift up thy mind to God-ward, ſaying: *O the goodneſſe of my God, bee thou eternally bleſſed and praiſed, which haſt diſcovered my hidden enemy, lying in wait to deſtroy my ſoul!*

But when things which are unpleaſant befal thee, thinke upon God's eternall decree.

6. But in other accidents, which go againſt the hair, and rather procure pain than pleaſure, thou maiſt thus exerciſe thy ſelf: when ſomthing happens which is of hard digeſtion to thy Senſuality, (as heat, hunger, ſickneſſe, blows, or the like,) elevate thy mind to that eternall will, who would have it ſo, and even from all eternity decreed that thou ſhouldeſt ſuffer this or that calamity, at this very time, thus grievouſly, and with theſe circumſtances, as thou now endureſt the ſame: Therefore ful of hearty joy ſay within thy ſelfe: *Now is thy divine will, (ô my eternall Lord and love) accompliſhed in mee; whereby thou wouldeſt from all eternity, that I now in this manner, meaſure, and number, ſhould receive and carry this croſſe: and I acknowledge all this to be for thine honour and glory, and my owne ſoules welfare and ſalvation.*

7. And

7. And make use also of such like thoughts, upon all dismall occasions of wind, weather, and the like; which are out of mans power and providence to hinder or prevent. So, when thou readest any thing which tickles thy fancy, turne presently all thy delight to thy Lord God; and conclude, that he infallibly is hid under those words, and now by them sweetly discovers himselfe unto thee. And in like manner, when good thoughts occure with complacency and delight, as proceeding from the reflexion upon some good and vertuous action; turne thy mind soddainly to thy Lord God, and adoring him with all possible humility and reverence, acknowledge that good to have sprung from his grace, and therefore thou gratefully returnest it to his glory.

So likewise in any sudden or dismall chance,

And in all selfe complacency.

Explication.

A larger Declaration of the foregoing Chapter, concerning the government of our outward ſenſes.

1. THat thou maiſt rightly ſtudy this uſefull ſcience, and learne how to governe & regulate thy outward *ſenſes*; it imports thee to uſe all exactneſſe of cuſtody, all curioſity, care, and diligence, and a perpetuall and never-intermitted practiſe; becauſe the *appetite* which ſits as Captaine and chief commander of our corrupted nature, is violently and inconſiderately bent to ſearch after worldly ſolaces, earthly pleaſures, and outward contentments; but being of it ſelfe unable to acquire them, makes uſe of the ſenſes, as his Soldiers and naturall inſtruments, to apprehend their objects; from whence drawing their images, it imprints them in the ſoule, and proceeds on to pleaſure, which (by reaſon of the ſympathy between it and the fleſh) dilates it ſelfe through all thoſe ſenſes

The appetite is violently bent to ſeeke it's pleaſure,

And makes uſe of the ſenſes to obtaine it.

es which are capable of such pleasure: and from hence is derived the common contagion which infects & corrupts both body and soule. Secondly, Now if thou art truly sensible of the danger of this *poison*, apply speedily this *antidote* which I have here prepared against it. Beware of giving up the reines to thy senses, or letting them run at randome after the unruly fancy of their leading appetite; and never make use of them in things tending to meere pleasure, without any further good end, profit or necessity; but if unawares, they have gotten vent, and are roam'd too far abroad, either recall them back, or else so regulate and curb them, that whereas they had at first basely yielded up themselves, and were become wretched prisoners to vaine pleasure, they may now bring home some noble spoile or other from each object, and place it as a trophe in thy soule, where she recollected within her selfe displayes the banners of her affections towards heaven in the contemplation of her Creatour: Which thou maist thus *practise*: So soone as any object is presented to one

The Antidot against this poyson.

And how to curb the senses roaming abroad.

one of thy outward ſenſes, ſeparate in thy thought, the ſpirit which is in that creature, from the creature it ſelfe, and conclude that it hath nothing of it's owne nature which can charm thy ſenſe, but that all is the work of God, whoſe Spirit beſtowes inviſibly this being upon it, gives it this goodneſſe, and indues it with this beauty, & with all other its prerogatives and perfections: Then rejoyce heartily that thy God is the onely cauſe and ſource of ſo many and ſo great excellencies, which he eminently contains in his divine eſſence, and whereof theſe are the leaſt and loweſt images.

By ſeparating the ſpirit of each object, from the thing it ſeſt materiall;

3. So when thou findeſt thy ſenſe faſtened upon ſome creature which hath onely a *Being*, reduce it in thy thought to it's firſt nothing, looking with the interiour eye of thy ſoule upon thy Soveraigne Creatour there preſent, who beautified it with this Beeing, and taking pleaſure in him alone, thou may'ſt ſay: *O Divine and deſirable eſſence! how doth my heart leap with joy that thou alone art the infinit beginning of all created Beeing.*

Whether it be a creature which hath onely a Being.

4. In

4. In like manner, when thou takeſt notice of Trees, Plants, Herbs, Flowers, and ſuch other things; thy underſtanding will ſoone diſtinguiſh, how they have no life of themſelves, but from that quickning Spirit, which falls not under the ſenſe of thy ſight; to whom thou mayſt thus breath forth: *Behold the true life, from which, in which, and by which, all creatures live and encreaſe: O the lively and lovely contentment of my heart!* Or hath a Vegetation, and increaſe;

5. Alſo, beholding brute-beaſts, let thy ſpirit ſoare up to thy God, the free beſtower of all their ſenſe and motion, ſaying: *O prime mover of all things, yet remaining in thy ſelfe immovable; how great is my joy in thy firm ſtability!* Or hath ſenſe and feeling.

6. Moreover, when thy ſenſe is touch't and tickled with ſome rare Beauty; ſeparate with all ſpeed that which appeares to the eye, from the inward ſpirit, which appeares not at all; and conſidering, that all the outward faireneſſe, ſprings onely from the inviſible Fountaine; ſay with a gladſome heart: *Oh! the jubilation of my Soule, when it thinkes* Or is indued with rare beauty;

on

on that eternall and immense beauty, which is the originall source and essentiall cause of all created comelinesse!

Or excellent perfection;

7. Furthermore, upon the consideration of any perfection in Creatures, first making the aforesaid separation, then break forth into these like expressions: *O rich treasury of all vertues! What contentment doe I feele, that all good is derived from thee, and by thee onely? and that all goodnesse, compared to thy Divine perfection, is a meer nothing.*

Also, when thou undertakest any action,

8. Stretching forth thy hand to any action, imagine thy Lord God to be the first cause thereof, and thou onely the living instrument of his Divine Majesty, to whom thy Soule may thus powre forth it selfe: *O Soveraigne Lord of this Universe! how truly doe I rejoyce that I can doe no one thing without thee, and that thou art the prime and principall agent in all good actions.*

Or refresheſt thy body with meat and drink,

9. Taking any refection of Meat or Drinke; reflect who gives that gust and savour to that Creature, and taking no other content than in him onely, say: *Be joyfull, O my Soule, that*

hat there is no true satisfaction out of thy God, and that in him onely hou hast a full abundance of all plea-sure.

10. If some delicious smell be welcome to thy sense; stay not there, but ascend to him who is the source of all sweetnesse, and with a heart softned with comfort, say: *Alas! O my Lord, as I am truly glad that all sweetnesse proceeds from thee, so grant I beseech thee, that my Soule being truly despoiled and uncloathed of all earthly pleasure, may purely soare up to thy delicious Paradise, and render a perpetually pleasing odour to thy Divine Nostrils.*

Or smelleſt delicious odours

11. When thou art taken with the Musicall harmony of some excellent voyce or instrument, turne thy soule to thy Saviour, and speake to him: *O my Lord and my God, how doe I joy in thy infinite perfections? O What an admirable harmony doe they make not onely in thy self, but also in the heavenly Citizens, and in all other thy Creatures?*

Or art delighted with musicall harmony,

12. Thus mayst thou (*my dearly Beloved*) raise up thy spirit from all sensible objects to the contemplation

Or any other sensible object.

on of the divinity, as hath beene hitherto declared. It remains, that thou be now in like manner instructed how to passe from the same sensible objects to the meditation of the Word incarnate, by frequent reflexions upon thy Saviours Life and Passion. And to this effect, all things of the whole Universe will conduce; by considering in them (as before) that Soveraigne and Supreme good which is the efficient cause of their whole being and beauty; and thence passing on to the admiration of his immense goodnesse and greatnesse, who being the absolute Lord of all these things, would vouchsafe to descend so low as to become man, and to dy for man, permitting his owne Creatures to arme themselves against him their Creator. Many things will also particularly represent to the eyes of thy Soule, these sacred mysteries; and put thee in mind of the severall instruments of his severe sufferings: Poore cottages will remember thee of thy Saviours stable and cribb: If it raineth, thou wilt reflect upon that Divine moysture, distilling from his

How to raise thy Soule by the same objects, to contemplate the Word Incarnate.

As for example, by the sight of poore cottages.

Of Raine.

his Body in his bloody agony: The Of Stones.
stones which thou beholdest, will
put thee in minde of the Rocks rend-
ing in sunder at his Death; the Earth Of the
will seeme to tell thee how it then Earth.
trembled; and the bright-shining
Sun, how it's light was then obscu- Of the
red. If thou considerest the water, Sun.
thou wilt fall into contemplation Of the
of that which issued out of his open- Water, &c.
ed Side; and the like of all other
objects: So, when thou tastest
Wine, thou mayst thinke of Christ's In tasting
Vinegar and Gall; when sweete Wine.
odours delight thee, how ill savour'd In sweete
were the carkasses upon Mount Smells.
Calvary where thy Saviour suffered?
Clouthing thy selfe, reflect how the In cloath-
eternall Word put on our humanity, ingthy self.
to adorne thee with his Divinity; In un-
Uncloathing thy selfe, how he naked, cloathing
was naild to the Crosse. Hearing a thy self.
noyse or acclamations of People, In hearing
remember those abominable out- Noyses.
cries; *Away with him, Crucifie him.*
When the Clock strikes the houre, In hearing
thinke how thy Saviour's Heart pan- the Clock.
ted in the Garden at the apprehen-
sion of his approaching passion; or
seeme to heare and count the cruell
stroakes

In time of Sadneſſe.

ſtroakes of the ſcourges, or blowes of the Hammer faſtning the Nailes through his Body to the Croſſe. If ſadneſſe and ſorrow ſeize thee, whether by reaſon of thine own ſufferings and ſickneſſe, or out of compaſſion to others, conceive, alas, how litle is all this, compared to the incomprehenſible Anguiſhes, Diſtreſſes, and Dolours, which pierced the Body and Soule of thy deare Saviour.

Other wayes to meditate upon ſenſible Objects.

13. Having thus ſhewed thee the way how to elevate thy underſtanding by meanes of all *ſenſible things* to the *Divinity*, and to the myſteries of the *Word incarnate*; I will now adde other means and methods of *meditation*, drawn from the ſame ſenſible objects; that as the Soul's guſts are various, ſo the ſpirituall diet may bee diverſly dreſſ'd and ſerv'd up for their ſuſtenance: though this variety may be alſo very uſefull, not onely to the ſimple, but even to elevated Soules well advanced in the way of the Spirit, which are not alwayes equally diſpoſed to ſublime contemplations. Neither need'ſt thou feare, that this *variety* will any way

ay confound thee, if thou art overned by the rule of discretion, nd the direction of thy ghostly father, which thou art carefully and umbly to follow, not onely in his, but in all other thy undertakings.

14. When therefore *objects* most pleasing to the eye, delicious to the sense, and desirable to flesh and blood, shall be represented unto thee; mark well, how meane these things are in themselves, though never so highly courted and cherished, extolled and esteemed by worldlings: how the best of them is no better than dirt and dung in respect of Heavenly happinesse, for which thou art designed, which thou desirest, and to which thou aspirest. By considering how meane the best of them are in themselves.

15. When thou gazest on the *Suns* glorious splendour; know for certaine, that thine owne Soule is far more bright and beautifull than it, if shee be in her Creatours grace and favour: otherwise, that shee is more obscure and abhominable, than darkesome and dismall Hell it selfe. As the Suns brightness.

16. When thou castest up thy corporall

The Heavens greatnesse. corporall eyes to the *Heavens*; elevate those of thy Soule to those higher & holyer mansions of the blessed Saints and Angelicall spirits, and there fix and feast thy thoughts, as in the happy mansion prepared for thy eternall abode.

The Birds melody. 17. When thou hearken'st to the *Birds* warbling notes; or other musicall charmes, soare up in spirit to the sweete harmony of Heaven, where *Allelujas* do for ever resound, and beg of thy deare Lord, that thou may'st become worthy to chant forth his perpetuall prayses amongst those heavenly quiristers.

Walking abroad. 18. When thou walkest on the *way*, ponder how each one of thy paces, is a step towards thy death.

Marking the swift flight of the Fowls. 19. When thou markest the *Fowls* of the Aire, how swiftly they glide through that yielding Element, and the running Waters hasting to their originall Ocean; thinke how thy life slipsaway, and thy Soule runs on to eternity with greater speed and celerity.

In time of Winds, Thunder, Stormes. 20. When impetuous *Winds* are rais'd, or *Thunder* and Lightning rage in the Skyes, remember the fearfull

carefull day of Judgement, and
rostrating thy selfe at the foot
f the *Crucifix*, adore thy Saviour,
nd implore his gracious assistance,
hat thou mayst now make such
ood use of the time hee lends thee,
hat thou mayst be then prepared
o appear courageously before his
read Majesty.

21. As concerning divers *Acci-*
dents, which are personall and pecu-
iar to thy selfe; thou mayst thus be-
ave thee. Also upon all other Accidents and Occasions.

When *Griefe* or Sadnesse hath seized thy Heart, when melancholy oppresseth thy minde, or when any inconveniency troubles thy body; raise up and resigne thy spirit to the supreme and eternall Will of God, who is pleased this molestation should even now, and thus, touch and torment thee for thy good, and his owne glory; and bee glad of this occasion to serve him according to his owne Decree and Disposition. As of grief & sorrow.

22. When thou castest thine eyes upon Christs sacred *Crosse*, consider it as the banner of thy warfare; from under which thou maist not step aside When thou lookest upon Christ crucified.

aside, without eminent danger of being surprised by thy sworne enemies; but following it closely and valiantly, thou hast certaine hope to conquer them, and climb up to heaven, loaden with their glorious spoils and trophees.

Or the image of the Blessed Virgin.

23. When thou seest the *image*, representing the holy *Virgin mother*; turne thy heart towards her, now reigning in Paradise; and give her thanks for having been ever ready to performe the divine will; for bearing and bringing up the Redeemer of the world; and for never denying her favour and succour to thee and all spirituall combatants humbly imploring it.

And the pictures of Saints.

24. So let the *pictures* of Saints, seeme as so many representatives of stout champions and Soldiers, who by their courages and conquests, have made thee a free and safe passage to follow them, imitate them, overcome with them, and be crowned with them in eternall glory.

Or entrest into Churches

25. Let the *Churches*, which thou frequentest, put thee in mind that thy soule is Gods temple, and should be therefore kept most purely, and

and prepared most perfectly for his comming.

26. Finally, let each *creature*, all objects, and every accident, be so spiritualized and distilled by thy understanding from their earthly and materiall drosse, that they may serve thee as true instruments to the perfection of thy soule, and become powerfull helps to thee, (contrary to thine enemies intention) in thy tendance to *divine union*, which is the onely end thou aimest at.

Finally, make all objects & accidents instrumēts to thy perfection.

How to regulate the Tongue.

1. And because the *tongue* hath a neere affinity with our *senses*, (for we willingly discourse of those things wherein we take delight) I will here (before I descend to the following doctrine) briefly shew thee how thou art to regulate, bridle and master this unruly member.

2. Much pratling proceeds ordinarily from a certain presumption, which perswades us that we are very knowing in the things we talk of; and so pleasing our selves in our own conceptions, we endeavour to imprint them in the hearers hearts with

Much talk proceeds from presumption.

soperfluous repetitions and replications of the same subject, to appeare thereby more masters of Reason than others, and as if they stood in need of our instruction. Few words cannot expresse the evill which ensues upon over-much talking; for it is the parent of idlenesse, an argument of ignorance, the dore of detraction, the instrument of falsehood, and the blaster of all true devotion and spirituall fervour.

Therefore avoid long discourses,

3. Wherefore I advise thee, in the first place, not to enlarge thy selfe in *long discourses*, before unwilling hearers, which is to break the lawes of civility; nor yet before them who are willing to hearken to thee, lest thou exceed the bounds of modesty.

And passionate expressions;

4. Avoid also, all patheticall and *passionate* expressions, and an over-high elevation of voyce; for both these are generally odious to the hearers, and alwayes arguments of thine owne vanity and presumption.

And all talking of thy owne affaires,

5. Speak not at all of thy selfe, of thine *owne affairs*, of thy patentage or kindred, unlesse in case of evident necessity,

necessity, and then also with all possible brevity, simplicity, sincerity, and modesty: and if another seeme superfluous in such speeches concerning himself, be thou edified thereat, but imitate him not, though his words tended to his self-abjection and accusation.

6. Discourse not of thy *neighbour*, nor any thing concerning him; unlesse a just occasion urge thee to defend him, or speak well of him. Or of thy neighbours.

7. Shew a willingnesse to talke alwayes of *God*, and particularly of his love and liberality, yet still with profound reverence for fear of failing; and therefore take more content to hear others discourse, than to talk thy self; and conserve what good words are delivered in the cabin of thy heart. But speak willingly of God.

8. As for all other discourses, let the only sound strick thy eares, but keep thy mind fixed upon thy God; And if thou needs must lend an eare because thy answer is expected, yet let thy souls eye glance up to heaven where thy Lord and love is, and first examin briefly in thy heart what thou intendest thy tongue should And ponder in thy heart, what thy tongue is to utter.

ſhould utter, wherby thou wilt quickly reſolve whether ſpeech or ſilence be now more to the purpoſe.

The praiſe and profit of Silence.

9. Laſtly, thou wilt find by experience, (*my dearly beloved,*) that *Silence* is an excellent and uſefull weapon for thy ſpirituall combat, giving courage to fight, conſtancy to continue, and confidence to overcome. It is his ſure friend, who diſtruſts himſelf, and truſts in his God; it conſerves us in devotion, and comforts us in the exerciſes of our duty: And ſurely the bare conſideration of the diſaſters cauſed by inconſiderate talking, is a ſufficient motive to make us in love with ſilence, to which that thou maieſt habituate thy ſelfe, make frequent uſe of ſolitude and retirement from fruitleſſe company, and frivolous converſation; whereby inſtead of men, thou ſhalt have Angels, Saints, and God himſelfe for thy companions and comforters. Finally, reflect upon the conflict which thou haſt undertaken, and conſidering how much thou haſt to doe, thou wilt find litle leaſure to ſpend in idle talk.

CHAP.

Chap. XIV.

Of the order to be observed in fighting against our enemies.

IN thy ſpirituall combat againſt thy diſordered affections, and paſſions, follow this method: 1.

First, enter into the cabinet of thy heart, and let thy inquiſitive thoughts ſearch and examine with exact diligence, which be the affections that there beare the greateſt ſway, and with what thoughts and motions thou art moſt frequently tempted, and troubled. Mark which are thy greateſt enemies,

Secondly, And having found thy foes, turne thy weapons againſt that ſingle enemy which then actually moleſts thee, moſt nearly endangers thee, and is now ready to grapple with thee, oppreſſe thee, and ruine thee. And ſingle out the fierceſt to fight with:

Thirdly, But in time of peace with thy paſſions, when no enemy appears in field, to provoke thee to battalle; begin thou with them; and make thy ſtrongeſt onſet upon thoſe which have chiefly indomaged thee, moſt frequently foiled thee, and wrought But when they appeare not, ſeek them.

thy greateſt confuſion before thy Lord God.

CHAP. XV.

What courſe he muſt take, who is conquered, and grievouſly wounded by his enemies.

1. IF thou chance to fall into ſome vice, either through frailty and weakneſſe, or through wickedneſſe, and wilfull malice; Turne thee with all ſpeed to God; and firſt reflect upon thine own baſeneſſe, & heartily hate thy ſelf. Then recollecting thy ſpirits, and converting thy ſelf againe to thy Creatour, confeſſe to him thy ingratitude, and ſay with an inflamed heart: *O my Lord, behold I have done like my ſelfe: For what better could be expected from me, than baſeneſſe, fallings, and ſinfulneſſe; I am ſorry, O my God, with my whole heart: and I confeſſe, I ſhould have done farre worſe, and fallen more grievouſly, had not the hand of thy goodneſſe, kept me, ſtayed me, and upheld me; for which I render thee moſt humble thanks. And now (O my loving Lord,) doe thou like thy*

When thou art faln, riſe with all ſpeed.

Pray with fervour.

thy ſelfe, according to the treaſures of thy mercies; and let me not live out of thy grace, nor ever offend againe thy moſt ſacred Majeſty.

2. Having thus ſincerely poured forth thy heart in the preſence of God, be not ſolicitous and thoughtfull whether he hath forgiven this thy ſin, or no: for ſuch a curioſity ſavours of pride, endangers thee to fall into the ſnare of Satan, renders thee unquiet, and conſumes time to little purpoſe: Therefore, caſt thy ſelfe purely into the paternall boſome of thy mercifull Lord, reſume thy wonted exerciſes, and take up thy weapons again, as though thou hadſt not fallen. Yea, ſhouldeſt thou chance to fall many times a day, and receive many grievous wounds from thy enemies; yet never deſpaire, never grow faint-hearted, or over-fearfull of thy ſelfe; but ſtill ſtand upon thy accuſtomed guards againſt all new aſſaults; and doe the ſame things with no leſſe confidence, the ſecond, third, fourth time, and as often as thy need ſhall require, as thou didſt at the firſt. Be not over-ſolicitous or fearfull.

3. This kind of *exercitation*, by ſo much

much the more displeaseth the Devill, by how much he well knowes it is highly pleasing to God: and for this reason he moves all his engines, to make us tepid and slack in frequenting it. Doe thou therefore use violence to thy selfe; and the more difficulty thou findest, by so much more redouble thy diligence in doing it; and esteeme it not a thing over-irksome, to renew it divers times in one and the same fall; And if after the first, next, and third relapse, thou feelest a grievous trouble, confusion, and diffidence in thy self; yet still endeavour, by all meanes, to recover the *inward quiet* of thy soul, and then reconcile thy selfe to thy loving Lord: For that disquietnesse of conscience remaining after the sinne committed, is not any signe of thy sorrow for having offended thy Saviour; but rather of fear, for thy owne private dammages, which thou hast thereby deserved.

But be diligent, and use violence to thine own Inclination,

Recovering the quiet of thy soule, and reconciliation to thy Soveraigne.

The way to get this quiet, is to forget thy fault.

4. Now the way to recover this *quiet* of mind, may be this: Having truly turned thy selfe to thy God, and humbly craved pardon for thy sinne;

sinne; thinke no more of it, but forget it totally for the future; and fix thy thoughts onely upon thy Lords infinite love, by which he earnestly desires to unite thee to himselfe, and make thee partaker of his eternall beatitude. And when by this or the like considerations, thou hast setled thy mind, and stated thy heart in tranquillity; turne thy thoughts againe to contemplate thy fall, and doe as thou wert directed in the beginning of this Chapter: And when thou goest to confession, (as thou shouldst frequently do,) recall all thy fallings and defects into thy memory, discovering them faithfully, and confessing them simply, to thy *Ghostly Father*.

Chap. XVI.

That we should keepe our Hearts ever quiet, and joyfull in our Lord.

Explication.

As when wee have lost the quiet of our Heart, we are to use all possible endeavours to recover it, (*as is aforesaid:*) So thou must know that no accident whatsoever can with any just reason deprive us of the same. For 'tis most true, (and thou hast beene often told it,) that wee must be angry with our selves for our sinnes, yet our griefe must bee govern'd with discretion, and accompained with tranquillity, and our sorrow must produce acts and resolutions of amendment of our lives, not of disquiet and anxiety in our selves. As for other painfull and unpleasing accidents, as the sicknesse, death, yea and eternall damnation of our deare friends; or the scourges of Plague, Famine, Warre, Saccagings, Burnings, and other evils, falling upon our selves; though

No accident, can justly deprive us of quiet.

as

as they are things contrary to our nature we must needs reject them; yet we may by the efficacious working of Gods Grace, not onely desire them, but even be delighted with them, as being the just punishments of the wicked, and exercises of vertue to the good, for which ends our loving Lord permits them to befall us.

For though wee must needs abhor things contrary to nature, Yet wee may love them as coming from Gods permissiõ.

Thus conforming our selves to Gods holy Will, wee may quietly and peaceably passe through the midst of all this lives bitternesses and contrarieties. And take this for a truth, that all *Disquiet* of mind, is displeasing to our deare Lord; because it is never without some imperfection, and evermore proceeds from some perverse root of self-love.

And so conforme our selves to his holy will.

1. To obtaine therefore this *quiet* of Heart in thy Spirituall Conflict; thou must (*O dearely beloved*) appoint over thy selfe a faithfull Scout-watch; which as soone as it discovers any thing tending to thy trouble and disquiet, may suddainly shoot off the warning peece, that thou maist timely betake thee to thy

Text. Thou art to appoint a sentinell.

thy Weapons for thy defence.

2. And if it falls out, (as too often it doth,) that through some sodain assault, thou art grievously perplexed; presently setting all other things aside, pacify thy interiour, and endeavour to regaine a quiet and joyfull Heart: for this being done, thou wilt be better enabled to prosecute other affaires, which will take small effect, so long as thy minde is troubled and unquiet: Besides, the enemy drawes from thence an occasion to tempt thee more violently; For hee feares this sacred *quiet* and peace of the Soule, (as Gods Tabernacle wherein hee workes his wonders,) and therefore hee shadows his wiles with the shew of good, that he may the more deceive us; exciting in us sundry pious affections, and holy desires: The cunning whereof is discovered by their fruits and effects; which is the bereaving our Hearts of all their joy and content.

If thou art surprised with perplexity, returnwith all diligence to quiet thy Heart.

3. So soone therefore as thou hast understood by thy scout-watches signe, of some new affection which demands admittance into thy heart;

And therfore admit of no new affections,

beware

beware of opening unto it, before thou haſt blunted the edge of thy Will from any deſire thereof; and made an humble offer of it to God, with an acknowledgement of thine owne ignorance and blindneſſe, whereby thou are uncapable (without the light of his heavenly Grace, which now thou imploreſt) to judge of this good motion, and to determine whether it comes from his glorious Majeſty, or from ſome earthly cauſe and conſideration.

Before thou haſt offer'd them to God;

4. And be ever mindfull of *mortifying* the proneneſſe of thy nature, before thou adventure upon any good deſire, though ſent from God himſelfe: for ſuch workes which enſue upon ſelfe-mortification, are more gratefull unto him, than thoſe which are done following the deſires of thy greedy Nature. And this *mortification* of thy will, doth generally better pleaſe him, than the worke it ſelfe.

And mortified thy will and deſire;

5. Thus, driving out vaine and vitious affections; and not raſhly admitting of the good, till firſt thy owne nature with all her paſſions and deſires be ſtilled and mortified;

Thou

Which is the surest way to remain in peace.

Thou maist be sure to remaine in *peace*, and to keepe the bulwarke of thy Heart in perpetuall security from all thy foes without, and from reprehensions, and selfe-afflictions within: which grudgings of conscience, though they seeme very good, and to come from God, because they blame thee of some defect; yet they are sometimes suggested by the Devill: but the onely way to know their off spring, is to examine their effects; For if such selfe-reprehensions keepe thee humble and quiet, and spur on thy diligence to doe good Workes, without lessning thy pious confidence in God; then receive them as inspired by him, who thus knocks at the inner dore of thy Heart to teach thee selfe-knowledge; But if they make thee unquiet, pusillanimous, unapt to good Workes, and diffident of God, (especially at the time when thou feelest these interiour reprehensions and afflictions in thy selfe;) conclude as a certaine truth, that they come not from thy Creatour, but are suggested by the deceiver: and therefore hearken not to them, but persist merrily

merrily in thy devout and accustomed exercises, as if thou didst not at all feel any such suggestions.

Chap. XVII.

That pious purposes, are sometimes the deceits of the Devil, to hinder our progresse in vertues.

1. BEsides these hitherto discovered deceits of the Devill, this yet remains, to wit, A holy purpose and earnest desire to fight afresh against our *former sinnes*: which hee therefore suggests unto us, that our minds being taken up with this employment, may forget their *daily* and more dangerous enemies, and wage no war against them. But he that will take due care of his own spirituall safety, must in the first place, fall to worke with his *next* neighbouring vices, and set them farther off: For through the neglect of this, we fall into many miseries; as they must needs doe, who are still wounded afresh, and yet thinke not of seeking for any salves to cure them.

The Devil suggests desires, to fight against former faults, that thou maist neglect the present.

2. Be-

And fall into self-complacency.

2. Because these purposes being esteemed as if they were reall performances; we fall into *selfe-complacency* and secret pride; in so much as wee cannot disgest a hard word, much lesse any blowes; and yet wee attend our high contemplations, and there wee can make resolutions to endure patiently, and purely for Gods Love, all the pains of *Purgatory*. And for that our inferiour will or sensuality, feels nothing in it selfe that troubles or grieves it, but looks onely upon such calamities as are to come hereafter; wee very sooliſhly and rashly conceit our selves, to bee some of them who are perfectly *patient*, and that wee actually suffer many great matters for Gods Sake.

Therefore thou art to fight actually with thy neareſt foes,

3. Wherefore, *O my beloved*, that thou mayst avoid this deceit, resolve, not onely in thy mind, but buckle thy selfe actually to fight with thy neareſt foes, which thou findest most troublesome, and most strongly to oppose thee: And thus thou shalt plainly perceive whether thy purposes be true or false, strong or weak: But I may not advise thee, to wage

war

war against those enemies which now trouble not thy quiet, unlesse thou plainly foresees't, that they are ready to assault thee: For then thou mayst lawfully and profitably fight them, before they fall on thee; that so thou mayest have the more strength and courage at the time of the Battail.

And not to irritate them which are quiet,

4. Yet perswade not thy selfe, that by this foregoing skirmish with thy enemies, thou hast already vanquish'd them, unlesse thou hast been for a long time exercised and vers'd in the acts of that vertue: in which case, thou maist resolve to fight against past grievous sinnes, though thou canst not yet conquer some lesse defects; the Divine Providence so permitting, to preserve thee in the humble acknowledgement of thy own weakness.

Unlesse thou art well vers'd in the acts of that vertue.

5. But whosoever is *careless* in overcomming *small* defects, and yet thinkes hee can easily vanquish the *greatest*, is notoriously vaine, and presumptuous, and even already falling into the snare of the Devil.

Bee not careless of smal defects.

EXPLI-

Explication.

Three things make our designs fruitlesse.

I Advise thee here, (*my dearely beloved,*) to take speciall notice of *three* principall occasions which render our designs fruitlesse, and defraud our pious purposes of their desired and expected effect: And this Doctrine will teach thee how to make good purposes as thou oughtest.

1. The relying upon our strength.

6. The *first* occasion, (which was also touched briefly in the foregoing Text,) is, that we ordinarily purpose to do a good action, or to avoid the doing of evil, more trusting to our strength, than to Gods assistance: And this pride, (whence this deceit proceeds,) so hudwinkes the eyes of our Soule, that wee see it not at all, and are therefore justly permitted to fall and faile of our expectation, that wee may thereby truly come to the knowledge of our own nothing, and learn to ground all our good designs upon the Divine Goodnesse, Grace, and Power, and not at all in our owne strength or indeavours.

7. *Anc-*

7. *Another* occasion is, that when our will enters upon a designe, it wants force and efficacy to goe through with it: (although it seemes otherwise to us, because our designe eyes the beauty of that vertue which wee aym at, rather than the difficulty which intervenes in the getting it,) So that it is no great mervail, that such ill-grounded designes fall downe to the ground, and melt away into nothing upon the first sight of the vertue.

2. The want of force to go through with them.

8. The *third* occasion is; That we addresse not our designes to their true and proper end, to wit, the pure Service and Honour of God; For wee make them oftentimes, in our afflictions, or in time of distresse and desolation, rather to find thereby some solace in such contrarieties, than onely to please our Lord God; who therefore lets us fall afterwards, that wee may discerne this deceit, and learn, to our cost, to aym at nothing else in all our actions than his holy Will and Pleasure.

3. The not levelling at the right end.

CHAP.

Chap. XVIII.

How the Devil ſtrives to withdraw us from the way of vertue.

1. Another deceit of the Devil,

MOreover, the Devil makes uſe of an other ſubtilty, to draw us from the path of vertues, into the precipice of vices. *As thus:* A certaine perſon fals into a ſickneſſe, which hee deſires to ſupport with patience; The Devil, (ſeeing that if hee thus perſevere, hee muſt needs get the habit of patience) ſuggeſts unto him divers motions and deſires, to do this or that good Worke, if hee could once have health reſtored: and that hee could ſerve God better; advance his owne perfection more effectually; and aſſiſt others more charitably, if hee were ſound, than hee can doe being ſick: And theſe conceits en-kindle more and more in the breaſt of the ſick perſon, till they make him *weary* and impatient of his ſufferings; as being thereby hindred from doing ſuch heroique actions: And by this deceit, the Devil caſts down a Soule from

Exemplified in a ſick perſon.

from the practice of *Patience*, (in which it first exercised it selfe) into open *Impatience* against this infirmity; yet not as a thing which is in it selfe displeasing, but as it is a hindrance, retarding her from the Execution of those good Works, which shee unquietly desires to performe.

Falling into impatience upon pious pretences,

2. Nor doth the enemy rest here; but having brought the sick person to this, proceeds on in his plot, and takes away from him the aforesaid suggestions (of such good Workes as hee could bring about if hee enjoyed his health) when the sick person perceives it not; leaving in him onely an ardent desire to recover his health: and if this follows not as hee would, hee falls into grievous sadnesse and great impatience.

And overearnestly desirous of health.

3. The best *remedy* of this, is, that when sickness or other adversity hath seized on thee, thou take care to admit no motion or desire into thy minde, which thou canst not forthwith put in execution: otherwise it will make thee solicitous, and leave thee in unquietnesse.

The remedy, is to admit of no purposes which thou canst not presently practice.

Ex-

Explication.

Because perchance they would not have their effect;

Or that God would not receive them.

And thou art in this case, to perſwade thy ſelfe with all patience, humility and reſignation, that perchance thy now-made intentions, would not have the effect thou imagineſt; becauſe thou art far weaker than thou thinkeſt: Or, that God by his ſecret judgements unknown to thee, by reaſon of thy demerits, will not receive this good from thee; but rather that thou humble thy ſelf under the ſweet and powerfull hand of his holy will. So likewiſe, ſhouldſt thou be hindred by thy ghoſtly Father, or any other occaſion whatſoever, from following thine own fancy in thy accuſtomed devotions, and particularly in receiving the ſacred Communion, trouble not thy ſelf with over-earneſt deſires, but truly deveſted of all ſelf-will, cloath and content thy ſelf with Gods good pleaſure; Saying ſweetly; *If the all-ſeeing eye of divine providence, found not in me ſo great ingratitude, and ſo many defects, I ſhould not be now deprived of ſo great a bleſſing as is the receiving of my ſweet Saviour in the bleſſed*

Therefore, trouble not thy ſelfe, when thou canſt not performe thy deſires;

blessed Sacrament; but humbly acknowledging that my loving Lord, doth thus discover unto me mine owne unworthinesse, his holy name be ever blessed and praised. O my God, I place my whole confidence in thy divine goodnesse, and hoping thou wilt accept of my will, which I force and conforme to thy disposition; I here open to thee my heart, ready to obey thy holy command, disposed to doe what thou inspirest; enter into it, I beseech thee, and endow it with Spirituall comfort, and courage against its enemies, and then doe with it, O my Creatour and Redeemer, that which is most agreeable to thy divine Majesty, and let thy sacred will be now and alwayes my onely food and nourishment, since I desire nothing more, ô sweet spouse of my soule, but that purged and freed from all things whatsoever displeasing to thee, I may be ready, adorned, and prepared for thy comming, and willing to follow thy blessed disposition in all things whatsoever.

But rest secure, that thy good will is acceptable to God.

If thou punctually performest these precepts, rest secure, (*my dearly beloved,*) that all thy good desires to doe well, which nevertheless thou canst

canſt not compaſſe; (either by reaſon of thine own nature, or the craft of thy enemy, or God himſelfe not permitting it, to prove thy reſignation to his holy will,) will always miniſter ſome occaſion of ſatisfying thy duty to thy Lord God in what manner hee beſt pleaſeth. And this is the trueſt ſervice thou canſt performe, and the moſt acceptable ſacrifice thou canſt offer to his divine Majeſty.

Another dangerous ſnare.

But I think it very convenient to give thee here another *caveat*, of a moſt dangerous and ſubtile ſnare, into which many, blinded with ſelfe-love, fall unawares: and this it is; They ſo palliate and excuſe their defects that themſelves doe ſcarcely perceive them.

Text.

4. And mark this diligently; that oftentimes when a man falls into *impatience*, he imputes it not to the pain which he endures, but for that he is impeded from the practice of good works: So that the cauſe of his impatience relates not to the ſickneſſe or adverſity it ſelfe; but partly to himſelfe as deſerving it, partly

Divers pretences for our impatience.

partly to others, whom he must be forced to trouble against his will; and partly to the omission of his spirituall exercises.

5. Thus he who failes in his ambitious seeking of honours and offices, will tell you, he complains not for his owne sake, but for the necessity of his family and friends, whom he might thus have helped. Now that such men deceive themselves, is made apparent by this; that they are not much troubled, when the very same effects come to passe by some other meanes or persons, which seemed to afflict them, and under which they covered their owne imperfection. But all unwarrantable,

6. For example, Thou tellest me, that thy sickness makes thee not impatient, because it is in it selfe grievous to thee, but for that they who are about thee are thereby overburdened: But should they, whom thou so much compassionatest, be as much overburdened in serving other sick persons, it would not much trouble thee: From whence it is evident, that not the sense of their trouble, but thine owne desire, As is explained by an example.

and ſelfe-love, was the true root of thy *Impatience*. And in this manner, thou maiſt diſcover the hidden deceits in the reſt of thy affaires.

Explication.

The remedy is, to ſeparate the pain, from the pretended circumſtances.

TO remedy this, I adviſe thee, (*my beloved,*) that as ſoone as thou doubteſt of ſuch a deceit, thou preſently ſeparate (by the help of thy conception) the *pain* which preſſeth thee, from thoſe *circumſtances* which are pretended excuſes for thy *impatience*; and then reflecting upon that alone, force thy ſelfe to produce true and efficacious acts of patience, and reſignation to ſuffer it willingly. Thus thou wilt either become a true practiſer of vertue, or at leaſt thine eyes will be opened to diſcover thy owne defects, whereof thou wert formally ignorant.

Text. Therefore deſire not to be freed from thy Croſſe,

7. Wherefore I exhort thee, that if thou art able to carry thy *Croſſe* with patience; thou never deſire to be freed from it: for this deſire brings with it two great evills: The *one* is, that if it deſtroyes not thy pa-

tience,

tience, yet it disposeth thee by little and little to impatience: The *other* is, That it deprives thee of merit before God, who esteemes that only a work of perfect Patience, (though short in reference to time,) which is done with the resignation of our wils to his divine pleasure.

8. In this therefore, and in all thy other works and proceedings follow this *Rule*: Withdraw and purge thy heart from all other desires and demands, than that onely, purely, and simply, which is conforme to God's will. And this is the way to be no more disquieted with adversity; since no such thing can befall thee, without his will and liking.

But conforme thy will to God's.

9. But when some lawfull meanes must necessarily be used for the expelling of some overburdening adversity; take heed left selfe-love creep into thy heart with them; and see thou apply them, (not to bee thereby freed from thy pressure) but onely because it is Gods pleasure, that thou shouldst make use of those instruments: and then thou canst not be discontented, in case they

Yet thou maist use lawfull meanes, so thou takest heed of self-love.

ſhould not conduce to thy deliverance from adverſity.

Explication.

How to oppoſe the Devill, ſtriving to deceive us with indiſcretion.

1. How to oppoſe the Devill, ſtriving to deceive us with indiſcretion,

WHen the Devill perceives that thou walkeſt on warily in the right track of vertue, ſo that his common cunning is become uſeleſſe to his deſigne of making thee goe aſtray: he then transformes himſelf into an *Angel of light*, and ſolicites thee with delightfull thoughts, flatters thee with paſſages of ſacred writ, and ſuggeſts examples of the Saints; that ſo conceiting thy ſelfe climb'd up to the top of perfection, thou maiſt fall more dangerouſly into the precipice which he hath dig'd for thee. To this end, he preſſeth thee to the puniſhment of the body, with diſciplines, abſtinence, haircloath, and other extraordinary auſterities; that either thou may'ſt be puffed up with pride, as thinking thou doſt very much; or mayſt de-

And preſſing us to afflict our bodies;

ſray

ſtroy thy health, and ſo become uncapable to doe good works; or laſtly, that having endured much in this kind, thou maiſt grow weary of doing penance, and abhor thy ſpirituall exerciſes; and ſo become a prey to thine enemies, and a ſlave to fleſhly and worldly pleaſures; which hath hapned to very many, whoſe preſumption having led them on, and left them to the conduct and violence of an indiſcreet zeale, after they had gone beyond the limits of their owne vertue by immoderate rigours, periſh'd at laſt in their owne inventions, and ſo became laughing ſtocks to their enemies; all which diſaſters will never befall him who diligently obſerves this doctrine.

Which though it is ſometimes good, Yet it muſt be tempered by diſcretion: For all cannot imitate the Saints in auſterity of life;

2. For although theſe voluntary pernances are ſometimes praiſeworthy, and may be meritorious, when ſtrength of body and humility of ſpirit doe correſpond and accompany them; yet they muſt be temper'd and moderated by diſcretion according to each one's nature and quality: Thus, hee that is unable of body to imitate the *Saints* in ſeverity of life, may right well be able to imi-

imitate their vertues; by being fervent in devotion, frequent in prayer, continually aſpiring to his Lord and love, ſetting naught by the world and himſelfe, and loving ſilence and ſolitude; HEE may be humble and affable to all, patient in ſuffering affronts, glad of the occaſions to doe good to his greateſt enemies, and finally reſolved to performe his Lords will, and promote his honour to the utmoſt of his power; and never to offend his divine Majeſty in the leaſt matter whatſoever.

But each one may imitate their vertues.

3. All which inward acts and mortifications are far more pleaſing to God than the outward macerations of the fleſh; and therefore I counſell thee to be very punctuall in thoſe things which concerne thy duty and obligation, but as for extraordinary rigours, be rather backward and fearfull, than indiſcreetly forward to embrace them.

Yet take heed of too much addicting thy ſelf to delicacies, &c.

4. Yet I ſpeak not here to thoſe delicate ones, who (though in other things they are ſufficiently ſpirituall) are over-much inclined to indulgence towards themſelves, and to an exact

exact doting and diligence in the preservation of their health, under pretence of being thereby better able to serve God and perform their duty; for they strive to couple two capitall enemies together, the Spirit and the flesh; but unprofitably, and with manifest danger to both, since this solicitude causeth oftentimes the losse of health to the one, and of devotion to the other. *Discretion* therefore must be the chief directour in this matter, which must distinguish the diversity of complexions and conditions, and since every one is not of like temper, all cannot be regulated by the same precept. To this I adde, that this *discretion* and moderation is necessary not onely in exteriour things, but also in the acquisition of interiour vertues, as I shall now declare.

Under pretence of health, or the better performance of thy duty.

Discretion therefore is the best directour in this matter of mortification,

5. For though the true Soldier of Christ, aspiring to perfection, must put no limits to his spirituall profit, yet there are some heats of spirit, which need to be quenched with the dew of discretion, especially such as in beginners are kindled with over-much fervour. Thou art there-

And also in the acquisition of vertues,

Which must be done by degrees,

fore to know that vertues are to be gotten by little and little, and by degrees, that ſo they may take the deeper roote, and become more durable in our ſouls. For example: If Thou art in the purſute of patience; Thou art firſt to ſtudy how to *bear* injuries and afflictions, before thou fall to practiſe thoſe higher degrees of *delighting in them, and deſiring them.*

And one by one, rather than all or many together;

6. Moreover I adviſe thee not to apply thy ſelfe to obtain all vertues or many together, but firſt and principally to practiſe one, and then afterwards another, for by this means a vertuous habit is more eaſily planted, and more firmly fixed in thy ſoul; For by this continuall exerciſe of one onely vertue, the *memory* is ready upon all occaſions, the *underſtanding* is ſtudying new means and reaſons to acquire it, and the *will* is more affectionately inclin'd to embrace it, than if many were the objects of their imployments. And ſuch is the conformity and affinity of one vertue to another, that the implanting of any one, is the preparing of the ground for all the others;

others; and whosoever is a proficient in the practice of one vertue, hath thereby learned the manner how to purchase another; in so much that as one is augmented, all the rest doe by the same meanes increase in our soules, by reason of their inseparable neareneſſe, connexion, and concatenation together; they being all beames proceeding from the same Sun, which is the divine light.

For, the obtaining of any one vertue is a preparation to all the rest.

Further advises for the getting of Vertues.

1. Besides those meanes formerly prescribed (*in the* 11. *Chapter*) for the obtaining of vertues, I will here give thee some brief and materiall advices concerning this important matter. *First*, it behooves thee to have a generous heart, a great courage, and a strong and resolute will, as being certain thou hast to doe with cunning enemies, and art to wrestle with many contrarieties, and suffer many Crosses.

First, thou must resolve to suffer.

2. In the *next* place thou art to bring with thee a particular inclination

2. Thou must beare a great love to vertue.

tion and affection to vertue, which thou canſt not want, if thou truly weigheſt how pleaſing it is to God, how excellent in it ſelfe, how profitable and how abſolutely neceſſary to the attaining of all perfection.

3. Thou muſt practiſe it upon all occaſions.

3. Every morning make ſtrong and efficacious reſolutions and proteſtations, to exerciſe thy ſelfe according to the probable occaſions which may that day be offered unto thee; and ſometimes in the day reflect upon thy ſelfe, and examine thy performance of this promiſe, and fervently renew thy deſires and intentions.

4. Apply all thy exerciſes to this end.

4. Apply all thy exerciſes, reading, prayer, and meditations, for the obtaining of that vertue which thou now practiſeſt.

5. Form acts thereof.

5. Endeavour ſo to accuſtome thy ſelfe to forme acts of vertue, both internall, and externall; that they by uſe may become as eaſie and naturall unto thee, as were formerly their contraries, which were conformable to thy vicious deſires.

6. The

6. The ſweet paſſages and ſentences of holy ſcripture, are of great force to this purpoſe; and therefore it will be convenient to commit divers of them to thy memory touching that vertue thou now aymeſt at; and to pronounce them often by mouth, or expreſſe them in thy heart, eſpecially upon the occaſion of feeling the paſſions and motions contrary to that vertue: For example, If *patience* be the vertue thou praiſeſt, reflect upon that ſaying of *Baruch*: *Child, ſuffer patiently the wrath which is faln upon thee.* And that of the Pſalmiſt: *The patience of the poor ſhall not periſh in the end*: Or that of *Salomon*: *The man that is patient, is better then he that is ſtrong, and he that overcomes his owne mind is better than he that conquers towns*: And; *in your patience you ſhall poſſeſſe your ſoules*: And; *let us by patience run on to the battaile which is propoſed unto us.*

6. Think upon ſuch paſſages of Scripture, as concerne, and commend it.

Baruch 4.

Pſal. 9.

Prov. 16.

Luke 21.

Heb. 12.

7. To the ſame purpoſe thou maiſt alſo make uſe of theſe *Jaculatory* prayers: *When, ô my God, ſhall my heart be arm'd with the ſhield of patience?* When *ſhall I for thy love ſuppore chearefully all contrarieties? O ſweet*

7. Make frequent uſe of Jaculatory prayers,

and

and dear ſufferings! which make me like my meek Saviour, afflicted for my ſake! O onely life, and love of my ſoul; ſhall I never compaſſe to content my ſelf for thy glory, amongſt thouſands of croſſes and calamities? Oh, how happy were I, if amidſt the flames of tribulations, I could burne with an inflamed deſire to ſuffer yet far more!

8. Theſe and the like ejaculations, and darts of affection, have great power to excite us to vertue, and penetrate even to Gods heart in heaven, eſpecially being ayded and accompanied with *two* wings: A true knowledge of the *content* our Lord takes in our practice of vertue; and a lively and longing *deſire* to obtaine it, for no other end than becauſe it is pleaſing to his divine Majeſty.

Which being ayded with two wings, will ſoare up to heaven.

9. Thou art yet farther to be inſtructed, (*my dearly beloved,*) concerning this weighty and neceſſary matter of obtaining vertue; that one maine point is, to make a continuall progreſſe in the practice thereof: For if thou leaveſt off this purſute, it will neceſſarily follow, that through the violent inclination of thy ſenſuall appetite, and the alluring impulſe of outward

Above all things thou art to make a continuall progreſſe;

outward objects; unruly passions will presse in upon thee, which will either destroy, or at least much diminish the acquired habits of vertue, and will moreover deprive thee of those manifold graces and gifts of God, which by thy continuance and progresse thou hadst infallibly obtained.

10. For surely the *way of the spirit*, walking to perfection, is farre different from that of *earthly travailers*; who lose nothing by their convenient stay, because they redresse their wearinesse, which is caused and increased by the continuance of their corporall motion; whereas in this way of the spirit, by how much more thou marchest onwards, by so much thy strength more increaseth; for, the inferiour part, (which by it's resistance, renders the path harsh and painfull,) is by this vertuous progresse still more and more weakned; and the Superiour part, (which is the habitation where vertue resides,) is thereby fomented and fortified: So that by the continuance of well-doing, thou still lessen'st the contradiction which thou feelest in thy journey,

For by going forewards, thy strength increaseth,

journey, and receiveſt a certain ſecret content in thy happy conqueſt.

11. Thus continuing thy deſigned courſe, and marching ever onward in thy journey, thou wilt arrive with leſſe paine and more pleaſure, aſcending by the ſeverall degrees and ſteps of vertue, to the top of the mountaine; where thy perfected ſoule will performe her pious exerciſes, not onely without contradiction, but with much guſt and content, having now tam'd and triumph'd over her unruly paſſions, and compleated her conqueſt over her ſelfe, and all things created, and being ſweetly ſetled in the boſome of the divinity.

Till thou art gotten up to the mountain of perfection.

12. Neither is it ſufficient, (*my dearely beloved,*) that thou ſtriveſt not to avoid the offered occaſions in this practice of vertues, (*as was declared in the ninth precedent Chapter,*) But I would have thee *ſeeke them out*, and joyfully lay hold of them, though they appeare never ſo little, and at a diſtance; eſpecially ſuch as are contrary to thy ſenſuality.

Thou art alſo to ſeek out all occaſions of practiſing vertue,

Eſpecially ſuch as are contrary to thy ſenſuality.

13. To this hard combat, thou mayſt incourage thy ſelfe by theſe following conſiderations: Whereof

one.

one is, that all such occasions, are the proportionate and probable, (yea necessary) meanes, for the acquisition of vertue; in so much that when thou demandest vertue of God, thou also askest these occasions, else thy prayers would be presented in vaine, and thy heart would contradict thy lips, yea thou mightest seeme to tempt thy Saviour, who ordinarily gives not patience without suffering, nor humility without contempt: and this is also true in all other vertues, which are all acquired by contrary accidents, whereby wee best perceive our owne wants, and therefore are most moved to desire their redresses: And by how much these feelings are more sensible, by so much the more strong and generous are the acts by which wee endevour to the vertues, wee stand in need of. Thou art therefore to make high esteeme, and improve thy self, by the least offered occasion; as by a crosse-looke or contradicting word, which will inure thee to the patient sufferance of more important difficulties.

This being the most proportionate meanes to attaine to it,

14. The *other consideration*, is that which

which hath beene formerly touched;

And comming from Gods Providence for thy particular profit,

To conceive of all things which befall thee, as comming from Gods Providence for thy particular profit: And though some of them, (as thine owne, or others faults,) cannot be imputed to God, (who abhors all sinne,) yet they may be referr'd to him, in as much as hee permits them, and though hee can, yet doth not hinder them: But all pains and punishments whatsoever, which happen to us, by and through our own defects, or others malice, are from God, and his Divine Providence, to which hee concurres, and wills that wee indure them; and which hee would not permit, (since they

And that thou maist draw good from them

containe a certaine deformity, a thing ever odious to his purity) but for the good wee may draw from them, and for other just reasons best knowne to his All-knowing Majesty.

15. Being therefore ascertained of Gods Will in all thy sufferings, and that he will have thee to support voluntarily all afflictions which befall thee either by others faults or thine owne; it follows, that they

are

are much mistaken, who (to excuse their impatience) pretend, that God will not this or that thing, because hee hates all evill: for what is this, but to seeke a cloake to cover their owne imperfections, and to refuse the carriage of that Crosse, which Christ hath lay'd upon their shoulders? The mistake of some rectified.

16. And I yet further assure thee, that thy Lord God more values thy voluntary disgestion of such difficulties which come from those persons whom thou hast obliged, than them which come from other accidents; because the pride of thy perverse nature is more suppress'd by these, than by them; and suffering these willingly, thou much contentest and exaltest thy God, by co-operating with him in that, wherein his ineffable bounty, and power do so greatly appeare: and this in effect, is to draw from the pestilent poyson of sinne and malice, a most pretious balsome of vertue and goodnesse. To suffer voluntarily by them who thou hast obliged, Is to draw vertue frō sinne and malice.

17. For beleeve it, (*my beloved,*) thy Lord God no sooner discovers in thy heart a lively and ardent love of

of well-doing, and a disinteressed desire of getting this glorious conquest, but hee forthwith prepares and presents this chalice of cruell temptations, and harsh occasions, which thou art to take and disgest, according as hee best knoweth and pleaseth: and therefore confident of his love, and carefull of thine owne profit, shut thine eyes, and receive it from his holy Hands, swallowing it down cherfully, readily, and securely, even to the last and least drop, as a medicine made by a Physitian uncapable of errour, and whereof the ingredients, are by so much more profitable to thy soule, by how much they have lesse sweetnesse and savour to thy sensuality.

Receive therefore the bitter cup, mixed by the heavenly Physitian; and swallow it cherfully.

How to make use of all occasions in the exercise of one vertue.

1. Thou hast beene already informed, (*my dearly beloved,*) that the single practice of one only vertue at once is more profitable, than the laying out for them all together; and that all occasions and occurrences,

ces, though different in themselves, are to be directed to that end; Now take this *method* for thy more easy proceeding therein.

2. It may fall out, that oftentimes in the same day or houre, thou mayst chance to be unjustly reprehended for something which in it selfe deserves praise; that thou maist cause anger by doing a good action, or be murmured against for some small subject; that thy fitting demand may bee harshly refused and rejected; that thou art suspected, contradicted, and calumniated without cause; that thy body is afflicted with paine, or thy mind with melancholy; that thou art imployed in some peevish affair; that thy diet is ill dressed; and finally, that thou suffereſt either in these-like inconsiderable occasions, or perchance in matters of more difficulty to bee supported, wherewith this miserable life is replenished.

In all occurring accidents of suffering,

3. In all which *accidents*, though it be good to produce divers acts of vertue, conformable to the variety of the subjects; yet following the Rule already prescribed, thou art to exercise

Make acts of that vertue thou then practiseſt.

exercise thy selfe in such acts, as directly aym at that vertue thou then practisest: As for example: If at the time when these occasions are offered, thou art upon the acquisition of *Patience*; thy way is to form acts, of induring those particular contrarieties, with all willingnesse, joyfulnesse, and chearfulnesse. If thy vertue bee *Humility*; acknowledge thy selfe most justly deserving these and far greater indignities: If it be *Obedience*; yield readily, and submit to Gods powerfull Hand, offering to obey (if so he pleaseth) not onely all reasonable creatures, but even to sinke below the brute beasts, and debase thy selfe under all things which any way disgust or displease thee: If it bee *Poverty*; content thy selfe in the want of all worldly comforts and conveniences, whatsoever: If it be *Charity*; produce acts of love, both towards thy neighbour, as being instrumentall to thy purchasing of vertue; and also towards God, as being the principall and loving cause, whence these crosses proceed, (or at least are permitted) to come upon thee, for

Examples, in the vertue of Patience.

Of Humility.

Of Obedience.

Of Poverty.

Of Charity.

for thy ſpirituall practice and profit. And by this *Doctrine* here delivered concerning the divers accidents which may dayly befall thee, thou mayſt eaſily learne how to behave thy ſelfe, and make acts of the *vertue* thou practiſeſt, in any one occaſion of ſickneſſe, perſecution, or other preſſures which are of longer durance.

Concerning the time thou art to ſtay in the practiſe of each vertue, Thy directour muſt be judge;

4. As for the *ſpace of time*, which is to be imployed in the practice of each vertue; it is not for mee to determine; but it muſt be regulated by the condition, diligence, and neceſſity, of each particular combatant; and according to their much or litle progreſſe in the way of the ſpirit; whereof none can be a competent judge, but hee who is the Guider and Directour of their ſoules.

Yet thou mayſt have ſome ſigns of thy progreſſe;

5. But whoſoever ſhall heartily ſettle himſelfe to worke, with the devotion and diligence aforeſaid, may without doubt make great profit in few weekes practice. And take this for one *ſure ſigne* of thy proficiency; if amidſt all dryneſſe, darkneſſe and diſtreſſes of thy Soule,

and

Whereof one is, if thou loseſt not courage in time of deſolation.

and feeling thy ſelf bereft of all ſpirituall guſt & comfort, thou ceaſeſt not to continue with courage in thy vertuous enterpriſes.

Moreover, the contradiction of thy ſenſuality in the forming of acts of vertue, will afford thee a manifeſt teſtimony; for the more *that* is weakned, the more *this* is ſtrengthened; ſo that to feele no rebellion in the inferiour part, eſpecially in unforeſeene aſſaults, is a true token of thy having obtained the vertue. And as far forth as thy actions are accompanied with a promptitude and alacrity of ſpirit, ſo farre thou haſt juſt reaſon to thinke thou haſt profited in this exerciſe.

Another, if the rebellion of thy ſenſuality be weakned.

6. Yet take heed of perſwading thy ſelfe, that thou art in ſure poſſeſſion of perfect vertue, or abſolute maſter of any one paſſion; though happily thou haſt not a long time, and after many hot skirmiſhes, felt theſe rebellious motions; for the deceit of the Devil, and the corruption of thy nature, may herein be too hard for thee, ſince that thing may bee really a vice, which ſecret pride cloath's in the habit of vertue.

Yet never thinke thy ſelfe a conquerour,

Becauſe vice may be cloathed in vertues dreſſe,

If

if furthermore, thou ſteadfaſtly beholdeſt the perfection to which God hath called thee, thou wilt eaſily grant, that hadſt thou made a far greater progreſſe in the path of perfection, yet thou art ſcarcely well entred into the firſt confines thereof. And thou haſt yet much more to do.

7. And I muſt here put thee in mind, (*my dearly beloved,*) that thou art ſtill to looke forwards, and advance thy ſelfe towards thoſe many vertues thou wanteſt, and not to reflect backwards upon thine owne ſmall profit and progreſſe: For this is to be left to thy Lord God, the true ſearcher and onely knower of hearts, who layes open this ſecret to ſome, and conceales it from others, according to his Divine knowledge of the pride or humility which will enſue thereupon, and ſo as a loving Father, takes away from *theſe* all danger, and gives *thoſe* an occaſion to increaſe their vertue. Therefore looke forwards upon what thou yet wanteſt,

8. Wherefore let the pious practitioner purſue his exerciſes with *patience and conſtancy*, though his perceives not it's owne progreſſe; aſſuring himſelfe that he ſhall in due time And purſue thy exerciſes with patience and conſtancy.

time see and feele it, when the Divine Providence shall be so pleased for his greater profit.

Chap. XIX.

How our enemy endeavours to make our vertues instrumentall to our Ruine.

1. Our deceitfull and dangerous *enemy* the Devil, tempts us also by those very vertues which wee have acquired, and casts them, as it were stumbling blocks, in our way, to occasion our ruine. To this end hee strives to make us please and delight our selves in them; that so being puffed up in our selfe-conceits, wee may fall afterwards into the dangerous precipice of pride.

Our enemies strive to make us take pleasure in our vertues.

2. But to secure thy Soule from this fearfull fall, stand alwayes in the open and plaine field, and persevere securely in the true and profound consideration of thy owne nothing; confessing that of thy self, thou art nothing, thou knowest nothing, thou canst do nothing, and

But do thou consider thine own nothing.

thou

thou haſt *nothing elſe in thee of thy ſelf*, but eternall damnation.

3. And take a ſerious care, to drive far from thee all ſuch of thine owne cogitations, which ſeeme to whiſper againſt this ſelfe-knowledge: For they ſurely are ſuggeſted by thy ſworne enemies, and therefore if thou excludeſt them not from thy heart, they will either kill, or cruelly wound it.

4. Which truth that thou may'ſt apprehend, I preſcribe this *Rule* unto thee: When thou goeſt about to contemplate thine own baſeneſſe, thinke not of the Benefits, Bleſſings, Gifts and Graces which thou findeſt in thy ſelfe; for theſe are none of thy goods, but Gods Gifts: turne thee therefore to take a view of what is thine own, and ſo thou ſhalt rightly judge how great, or rather how truly nothing thou art: which thou mayſt thus do: Imagine the *time before* thou hadſt a being, and thou wilt ſoone finde that for an eternity thou wert an abſolute nothing, that thou didſt nothing, nor couldſt contribute in the leaſt manner to thy owne life, or any thing

And mark well what is within thee of thine own goods, and what of Gods Gifts.

What wert thou from eternity?

What art thou in time?

which thou now poſſeſſeſt. If in the next place, thou doſt ponder the *time* wherein thou *begann'ſt to be ſomething*, thou wilt likewiſe underſtand, that thou receivedſt it from the pure bounty and benignity of thy God alone; for hee created thee, and gave thee this life, which he ſtill continues and conſerves unto thee, and hee doth all other things thou now haſt, knoweſt, and poſſeſſeſt. In ſo much as thou canſt not meete with the leaſt occaſion in thy ſelfe, whereon to ground a thought of thy being any thing, or of deſerving any eſteeme above others, for any thing.

What good canſt thou do of thy ſelfe?

5. Now as concerning thy ſtate of grace, and abilities given thee to do good: tell mee, Can thy *nature do the leaſt good thing* by it ſelfe, deprived of thy Creatours Divine Aſſiſtance? If further thou turne thy thoughts upon thine owne *evill and ſinfull workes*, and others yet worſe which thou hadſt undoubtedly done and continued in, if God of his great Mercy had not kept, ſtayed, and withdrawne thee with the right hand of his holy Grace;

What evill haſt thou, or mighteſt thou have done?

thou

thou wilt be easily brought to acknowledge, that thine owne wickednesse, (both by reason of the length of time, in which thou layst drownd therein, and also of the multitude of thy evill actions and perverse affections,) is so great, that it can neither be expressed, nor numbred; in so much that thou art, or surely mightst have beene, like another infernall *Lucifer*! therefore unlesse thou wilt be a sacrilegious felon, and steale away the goods of thy Lord God, and attribute them to thy self, thou mayst justly esteeme thy selfe every day worse than other.

Explication.

YEa, thou hast good grounds to think thy selfe the most ungratefull and ungratious wretch in the World, and to be nothing but dirt and dung of the Earth, or that which is more stinking and abhominable, becaus the loathsomnesse and stench of thy *sinnes* is farre greater.

So that thou maist justly thinke thy selfe, the worst of all men.

6. Yet here take this necessary

Text Yet be just in thy self-accusation,

caveat, That *Justice* be joyned with this confession of thine owne baseneſſe; leſt it bring thee more prejudice, than profit: For if in this knowledge and humble confeſſion of thy ſelfe thou excelleſt ſome other, (who by reaſon of his owne blindneſſe thinkes himſelfe ſomething, and for ſuch deſires to bee eſteemed by others;) and art deſirous that upon this ſcore, others ſhould thinke well of thee, and eſteem thee that which thou acknowledgeſt thy ſelfe not to be; thou art far worſe than he is.

7. Wherefore that the acknowledgement of thy own baſeneſſe and vildneſſe, may be true and reall, and render thee pleaſing to God; thou art not onely to acknowledge thy ſelfe baſe and wicked; but behave thy ſelfe as ſuch a one, treat thy ſelfe as ſuch a one, and deſire to be ſo held, and ſo handled by all others.

And not only acknowledge thine own baſeneſſe, but ſo uſe thy ſelfe.

Explication.

Abhorring all honours, rejoycing in affronts, and condeſcend-

ing

ing upon all occaſions to performe the baſeſt imployments, and to be ſleighted and contemned by every one; yet ſtill for the onely end and intention to humble and exerciſe thy ſelfe, and not out of a certaine pride, and ſecret preſumption of ſpirit.

8. And if it ſometimes happen that for ſome good worke, wherein thy Lord God vouchſafed to make thee inſtrumentall, thou comeſt to gaine a good eſteeme, or beginneſt to be beloved, or praiſed by others: Take heed, and be not drawne a tittle from the aforeſaid truth of thine owne baſeneſſe: but turn thy heart to thy Lord God, and there ſay to him: *O my Lord, let it never enter into my thought, to ſteale from thee thine own Divine goodneſſe.*

Text.

And ſtick to this amidſt all praiſe or applauſe of others.

Explication.

TO thee, O my God, all praiſe and honour is onely due; to thee onely be given all the glory, and to mee that which I truly deſerve, which is onely confuſion.

Text. And afterwards thou maist reflect upon him who prayſed thee, ſaying within thy ſelfe: *Why doth this man thinke I am good? When indeed there is none good, but thou onely my good God.*

If thou thus proceedeſt and practiſeſt, thou rendreſt truly to God that which is his, and putteſt thy ſoule in a diſpoſition to receive greater grace.

Explication.

9. BUt if the memory of thy *good deeds*, endanger thy ſoul to fall into *vanity*; looking upon them preſently as none of thine owne goods, but as Gods Gifts, reaſon thus with them: *How can you appear and pretend to have a being in my heart, ſince I neither gave you a beginning, progreſſe, nor perfection; but my good God, by his onely Grace and Goodneſſe created you? I therefore acknowledge him for your principall Father, and to him I returne all hearty Thanks, Praiſe, Honour and Glory.*

And let not the memory of thy good deeds, puff thee up with vanity;

10. Then

10. Then penetrate the *beſt* of thy *good workes*, and thou wilt find, thou haſt not onely fayled in perfectly correſponding to the grace which God gave thee to perform them; but alſo that they are far from that perfection, purity of intention, and due fervour and diligence, which ſhould have accompanied them: in ſo much that the whole matter being impartially pondered, thou mayſt rather be confounded and aſham'd, than puffed up with pride and complacency. For nothing is more certain, than that the pure and perfect graces and gifts of God, are deſtroyed and leſſened by our imperfections, when we put them in practice.

For thou wilt finde the beſt of them very imperfect.

11. And if thou wilt elevate thy ſpirit to thy Lords ſupreme Greatneſſe and Goodneſſe, and truly reſent what ſervice is due to ſo Divine a Majeſty; thou wilt ſoone conclude that there is no cauſe or colour for thee to glory in thine owne merits, though thy actions had beene farre more excellent and renowned than they are; but accuſing thy ſelfe of want of duty, and trembling at thine own deficiency, wilt put on the perſon

And that thou haſt no colour to glory in them,

But to accuſe thy want of duty.

perſon of a poore penitent deſiring pardon, and ſaying; *O my God, be favourable unto mee, a wretched Sinner.*

Thou mayſt furthermore, enter into comparíſon of thy workes, with them of the Saints and Servants of God; and thou wilt by that parallel, plainly perceive the baſeneſſe of thy beſt actions.

Learn therefore humility,

12. Learne therefore (*O my beloved*) this neceſſary leſſon of *humility*, and acknowledge thy ſelfe with thy whole bundle of *good workes* put together, to be a meere nothing; for this is the firme foundation, whereon thou art to raiſe the perfect ſtructure of all other vertues; and the deeper thou layeſt this groundwork, the higher will be thy ſpirituall building; yet never thinke thou canſt digge it deepe enough, but rather imagine, that if an infinity could befall a creature, thyunworthineſſe would be infinite. This point, (to wit, *ſelfe-acknowledgement*,) being well practiſed, gives thee the poſſeſſion of all that is good, and without it thou art leſſe than nothing, though thy actions are more perfect than

Which is the foundation of all vertues,

And without which thou art leſſe than nothing.

thoſe

those of the greatest Saints, and thy heart be in continuall recollection with thy Creatour. *O blessed knowledge!* which makes us happy on Earth, and glorious in Heaven! *O true light*, shining out of our darknesse! *O great nothing*, which rendrest us masters and monarchs of all things! No, (*my dearly beloved,*) I will never give over the pressing of this Point, which thou art ever to practise.

13. If therefore thou desirest to *praise* God, *accuse* thy selfe; if thou wilt *exalt* his Divine Majesty, dive into thine own *misery*; If thou wilt *find* him, climb not up to Heaven, for hee will fly from thee, but rather descend into the abysse of thine own nothing, and hee will thither *come to thee*, and there embrace thee. Yes, hee will court and cherish thee by so much the more dearly, deliciously and tenderly; by how much thou seemest abject and vild in thine own eyes, and art well pleased to have all others slight, and scorn thy company, as a meere out-cast, an object of derision, and a thing abominable.

And it is the onely way to praise, find, and please God.

Therefore thou art bound to him, for permitting thee to be ſcorned;

14. Know furthermore and conſider thy ſelfe moſt *unworthy* of ſo high a favour from thy Lord God, as to bee neglected and ſcorned by all; and faile not to render him moſt hearty and humble thanks.

Finally, thou art to be *gratefull*, and ſenſible of thy great obligation to them who have adminiſtred the occaſion of this thy ſpirituall improvement, and to acknowledge thy ſelfe moſt bound to them who have moſt maſter'd and mortified thee.

And to them who do it.

15. But if notwithſtanding all theſe true and weighty conſiderations, the ſubtilty of the Devil, thy own ignorance, or an evill inclination, ſhould have yet the power over thee, ſo as to diſquiet and trouble thy minde with fancies of *ſelfe-praiſe*, and make ſome impreſſions in thy heart, of thine owne merits and deſerts: 'Tis then thou art chiefly and couragiouſly to beat downe and humble thy ſelfe; ſince thou findeſt by experience, how poorly thou haſt profited in the way of the Spirit, and knowledge of thy ſelfe, and what deepe roots thy pride

And be ever wary of the devil, and thine own inclination.

and

and vanity have taken in thy entralls: And this is the way to suck hony out of poyson, and to draw health from wounds.

Of Rash Judgement.

1. From this vice of *selfe-esteeme*, springeth up another no lesse dangerous, which is *Rash-Judgement* concerning our neighbours, and this is commonly followed with contempt of their persons, and detraction from their good name: This vice as it hath its beginning from a *peevish and proud inclination*, so likewise it is nourished and fomented by no other food; for Pride and Rash Judgement increase together, comply with each other, and doe both joyntly covertly and insensibly concurre to deceive us. For wee presume to exalt our selves, by iudging meanly of others, and we thinke our selves free from those imperfections, which we are fully perswaded are in our Brothers.

Rash-judgemen springs from Self esteeme,

And from Pride.

2. Now, our wylie enemy, the Devill, no sooner discovers this perverse disposition in us, but hee is busy,

The Devil strives to keepe open our senses, upon our Neighbours actions;

busy in keeping our senses open, to see, heare, examine, controll, and heighten the faults of our Neighbours: hee is diligent to imprint *this* imperfection, or *that* indiscretion, of such or such a person in our spirits: If therefore (*my dearly beloved*) thy foe is so forward and watchfull to intrap thee, be thou equally carefull and vigilant to avoid his plots, and rescue thy soule out of his dangerous snares; and in the first place when anothers defects are presented before thee, presently withdraw thy thoughts; but if thou art solicited to give sentence, let it bee a flat deniall, and short answer, that thou hast no such power given thee: and if thou hadst any such privilege, thou couldst hardly forme a right and sound judgement, being invironed and prevented with such a number of passions, inclining to thinke more amisse than there is just cause.

But wee must be as vigilant, to shun, as he is to lay his plotts.

First, by denying to give any sentence;

3. Then make use of this *second and singular remedy*: Let the consideration of thine owne wants, and interiour necessities, so take up thy whole time, and thoughts, that seeing how convenient it is to looke homeward,

Secondly by looking homewards, upon our own selves,

ward, and how much thou art concerned to take order in thy owne bleeding affaires; thou mayst recall thy mind from roming abroad, and have no leasure left to lend away to others superfluously, who hast scarcely time enough to looke after thy selfe in things of absolute necessity. And this serious search into thine owne wants, will cleare the inward eye of thy soule, from those ill humours which ingender this pestiferous imperfection of Rash judgement. For know, that when thou conceivest amisse of thy Neighbour, there is some root of the same evill in thine own heart, which is apt to take the impression of that object which is like it selfe. When therefore thou feelest this itching desire to censure anothers fault; fall into passion at thy selfe, as if thou wert equally culpable, and enter into these terms with thine owne Soule: *Is it possible, that I, Who am so miserable, not onely because I wallow in the same mire, but am also full of greater faults and inperfections, shall notwithstanding be so proud and presumptuous as to take upon me to judge another?*

Where we shall finde some root of the same fault wee blame in them.

another? Thus the weapons which first pointed at thy neighbour, but have thus pricked thine owne heart, will prove a perfect cure of thy wounds, and a true comfort to thy soule.

If the fault be manifest, put a charitable construction upon it;

4. But when the fault which is committed, is become manifest, then excuse it with a *charitable construction*; and piously conclude that thy brother hath many hidden vertues and perfections, for the custody whereof he is thus permitted to fall: or that it is to humble him for a time, to make him see his owne nothing; and so from this contempt of others, raise him afterwards to higher perfection in the sight of the divine Majesty, whereby his gaine may prove greater than his losse. But if the sinne be not onely manifest, but even monstrous, and proceeds from a perverse and obstinate heart; turne thy thoughts to *Gods secret & severe judgements*; where thou wilt find some, whose works seemd to speak them highly wicked, to have afterwards shew'd evident signes of holinesse, and died with opinion of sanctity: and thou wilt also find o-

If monstrous, have recourse to Gods secret judgements,

thers

thers, who were thought to have touch'd the top of perfection, tumbled downe into the miserable precipice of eternall damnation: It is therefore thy part to tremble at these unperceiveable proceedings of divine providence, and to remaine alwayes carefull and fearefull of thine owne condition, not intermedling with that of others, which is concealed from thy knowledge.

And tremble at the proceedings of his Providence.

5. Finally, beleeve it for a certainty, that all the good and charitable constructions thou putteſt upon thy neighbours actions, are the assured effects of the holy Ghost, and that all contempt, rash censures, and bitterneſſe of mind against them, are derived from thy owne malice, and thine enemies suggestion: wherefore raze out of thy soule with all speed and diligence, such impressions as glance at thy brothers imperfections, and shut not thine eyes to sleep, before thou hast excluded all such thoughts out of thy heart.

And know that all Charity proceeds from God's good spirit, and all bitterneſſe from the Devill,

Of the meanes to shield us against the attempts of our Enemies at the time of death.

The way to be conquerours at our death,

1. Though the whole *course* of our life is a *continual warre*, yet the most signall and important day of battaile, is the day of our death; and whosoever is conquered in that last and inevitable skirmish, remaines hopelesse of the victory for all eternity: wherefore that thou mayst be then ready to beare this fatall brunt with constancie, fight now and

Is to fall now upon our enemies before-hand.

fall upon thine enemies before hand couragiously; for he that is a stout combatant during his life, is most like to be conquerour at the poynt of death, as having by long practice gotten the true use of his weapon.

2. Thou art also to make *death* familiar to thy thoughts, by frequent and attentive conference and consideration; for so thou wilt lesse feare it when it comes; and be freeer to resist what will then so fiercely assault thee. Worldlings heare not willingly this doctrine, because it interrups them in the cariere of their pleasure, which they follow with over-

over-much passion and affection, and consequently leave it not without great griefe and affliction. But doe thou *(my dearly beloved)* make timely preparation for a matter of so high importance; and to this end, imagine thy selfe to be sometimes all alone, helplesse, and comfortlesse, struggling hand to hand with death; and there represent to thy soule, these things following; which as I conceive will then most afflict thee: and consult with thy own heart how to remedy all things before it be to late, that so thou maist readily make use thereof in thy lateſt and greateſt necessity: For that which can once onely be acted, ought in all reason to be very exactly studied beforehand, lest a fault be committed, which can never be redressed.

Therefore make timely preparation,

And now study thy answers, to the four challenges, which thy enemies will then send thee.

Of four assaults which our enemies make against us at the time of Death; And first, Of their assault against Faith, and of the meanes to defend our selves.

3. Our subtill enemies, make ordinary their strongest opposition when

The First is against Faith.

when we are in the weakeſt condition; and therefore they raiſe four maine batteries againſt us, from whence they let fly their empoyſoned darts at us into our death-beds: aſſaulting us, with temptations againſt *Faith*, with *Deſpaire*, with *Vain-glory*, and with *Illuſions*.

The remedy is, to retreat from thy Underſtanding to thy Will,

4. As for the *Firſt*: When the Devill ſets upon thee with falſe arguments, to batter downe thy Faith; make a ſpeedy Retreat from thy Underſtanding to thy Will, ſaying: *Avoid Satan, thou Father of all falſhood, I will give thee no audience; for it ſufficeth and ſatisfies me to beleeve that which the Catholique Church propoſeth unto me.* Take heed therefore of admitting any fancies concerning thy Faith, though they appeare never ſo friendly; but take them all, as indeed they are, for deceits of the Devill, to ingage thee in a diſpute with him: But if thou art ſo ſodainly intrapped, that thou wanteſt time to retreat, ſtand ſtrongly upon thy firme ground: and never yield either to the reaſons he allegeth, or to the authorities of Scripture he citeth, aſſuring thy ſelf, that they are either

full

full of fallacies, or corruptly quoted, or ill applied, or falsly interpreted, though they appeare never so clear and evident.

5. And should the subtill Serpent fall upon interrogations to intrap thee in thy answers: As, *What doth the Church beleeve?* vouchsafe him no reply, but frame an inward act of lively and firme *Faith*; or undauntedly tell him, that the *Church beleevs the Truth.* If he againe proposeth, And, *What is this Truth?* Say, it is even that thing which this Church beleeveth. And to give no answer to thy enemies questions;

6. But above all things, keep thy heart and mind fixt and attentive upon the contemplation of Christ crucified: where sweetly discoursing with thy Lord and love, say: *O my God, ô my Saviour, ô my Creatour, succour me speedily, abandon me not in my necessity, let me not swerve one title from the truth of thy Church; and grant me, I beseech thee, this grace, that as I now live in it, so I may constantly dy in it, to thy glory, and my owne eternall comfort.* But to fix thy thoughts, upon Christ crucified.

Of

Of their Second assault of Despair, and the Remedy against it.

The second assault, is of Despaire,

7. The Devills next Engine, wherewith he strives to ruine and destroy us, Is the fright he puts into us, upon the thought of our enormous offences, whence he would cast us down headlong into the gulph of *despair*. In which cruel danger, stand

Where, thou art to observe this certain Rule.

fast to this certain *Rule*: That all reflexions upon thy sins, proceed from Gods grace, and tend to thy good, if they be followed with effects of humility, with true sorrow for having offended so good a God, and with a firme confidence in his goodnesse: But when this reflexion disquiets thy mind, makes thee doubtfull and distrustfull, peevish and pusillanimous, then (although thy sinnes appeare indeed sufficient, to make thee think thy selfe justly and eternally damned, and that there can be no reason for thee to hope after Salvation,) assure thy selfe they are clearly the effects proceeding from Satans suggestions: And therefore humble thy selfe so much the more,

And to have a perfect

more, and be more hopefull and confident in thy God; whereby thou wilt confound and conquer thy enemy with his owne weapons, which he prepared for thy destruction. hope, and humble confidence in God,

8. When therefore thy sins are suggested to thy memory, conceive a perfect hatred of them, as of things detestable to the divine goodnesse; yet be sure to have an hopefull confidence in thy Saviours passion: And I tell thee yet more; shouldest thou seem to heare God saying unto thee, *Away, thou art none of the number of my sheep*; yet thou art not to lose thy confidence in his mercy, but humbly to reply, *Thou hast just reason, ô my Soveraigne Lord God, to shake me off for my sins sake; But I have greatest reason to be confident of thy goodnesse and mercy, and to beleeve that thou wilt pardon me; therefore I humbly beg salvation for this thy wretched creature; damn'd indeed by it's owne malice, but redeem'd by the dear ransome of thy Sonnes most pretious blood and passion. Thou wilt save me, ô my Redeemer, for thine owne glories sake; and I resigne my selfe freely* And never to distrust his mercy, And the merits of his passion.

into

into thy hands, upon the assurance of thy infinite mercy. Doe with me, and dispose of me, as thou best pleasest, for thou art my onely Lord; and if thou killest me, yet I will place my whole hope in thy heavenly goodnesse.

Of the assault of Vain glory.

The third assault is, of vain-glory,

9. The third assault, is that of *Vain-glory and presumption*: Here thou art to be equally wary of the other extreme, and never to admit of the least conceit or complacency in thy selfe or thy actions, but to referre all goodnesse that seemes to be in thee, purely to Gods great mercy, and the merits of Christs passion; Imbase thy selfe in thy heart, whilst there is the least remainder of breath in thy body, and acknowledge thy God as the true fountain of all thy goodnesse. Look not at all upon thine owne merits, but rely totally upon his mercy. Distrust thy selfe, and trust in thy Saviour; and think what poore provisions thou hast laid up in store for this passage of death, and thy journey to eternity; and how vain and useless all thine owne indea-

Which is conquerd by distrust of thy self, and trust in God.

indeavours will prove, unleſſe God will be pleaſed to put his helping hand, and gather thee under the ſacred wings of his divine protection.

Of illuſions, and falſe aprearances, which are uſually preſented at the hour of death

30. If thy obſtinate enmy, who is ever ſtudying to ſupplant thee, ſhould at this time ſet upon thee with *falſe appearances*, and *transfigurations of himſelfe into an Angel of light*, thy beſt way is, to recurre to the certain knowledge of thine own nothing, and boldly to anſwer him: *Depart, ô thou accurſed devill, into thy own darkneſſe; I neither deſerve nor deſire any viſions: I need no other thing than the mercy of my Jeſus, the prayers of the Virgin Mary, and the aſſiſtance of the Saints.* Yea, though thou haſt reaſon to gueſſe by ſome evident ſignes, that theſe things are from heaven, yet ſtill deny them all acceſſe unto thee, and drive them far from thee; nor needeſt thou fear leſt any ſuch reſiſtance (grounded

The fourth aſſault, is by falſe illuſions.

Againſt which, have recourſe to the confeſſion of thy owne nothing; And admit them not though they ſeem to come from heaven.

ded upon thine own indignity) ſhould diſpleaſe God; for if the viſions come from him, he knowes well how to make them manifeſt, notwithſtanding thy oppoſition: and art ſecure to be thereby no loſer; ſince he who gives his grace to the humble, cannot be angry with him who practiſeth ſuch high acts of that vertue.

After theſe generall temptations, follow others in particular.

11. Theſe are the common and ordinary engines, which our enemy makes uſe of in this laſt paſſage: After which follow his other trained bands of *temptations*, according to each ones particular inclination and diſpoſition. Stand therefore timely to thy arms (*my beloved*) before this great day of battail ſteal upon thee; and fight now valiantly and generouſly againſt thy violent paſſions and imperfections, that thou mayſt be prepared at that time, which takes from thee all other time and power to perform it.

CHAP.

Chap. XX.

That we must never flatter our selves, as having subdued our enemies; but must often return, to our wonted exercises, as if we were yet Novices in this Spirituall Conflict.

I have yet one thing (*O beloved*) to tell thee of; which is, that thou never perswade thy selfe to have gotten a full victory over any *one of thy passions*, though perchance thou hast for a long time together felt no motions thereof: But that thou often renew thy accustomed spirituall exercises, as if thou wert yet a young beginner, and a freshwater souldier now entring the list.

Never perswade thy selfe, thou hast gotten a full victory.

But often renew thy exercises.

2. For if we behold, and desire to follow the perfection whereunto God hath called us; wee shall find it to be so high and so copious, that after our best spent endeavours, wee shall scarcely presume to say, that we have learnt the first principles thereof: And besides this; That which seemes to us a vertue, may indeed sometimes be a vice; our judge-

For perfection is very high and hard to be obtained.

ment being deceived by some secret pride.

Chap. XXI.
Of Holy Prayer.

1 The fourth weapon is Holy prayer.

WE have hitherto (*ô beloved*) through the divine assistance heard and learned what concerns *Diffidence in our selves, Confidence in our God, and continuall Exercise*; which are the three necessary meanes, to get the victory of our passions, and to conquer the disordered motions of our Sensuality. Now follows the *fourth*, which is *Holy Prayer*; and this is the best and most efficacious means to obtain all good things from Gods gracious and bountifull hand.

Explication.

A further description of prayer.

FOr *Prayer*, is the food, the comfort, and the support of the soule during its pilgrimage upon earth: It is a secure bridge for it to passe over the severall seas of adversities and prosperities: It is a wall of defence

defence against vices and temptations; a key opening into the cabinet of celestiall treasures; the dore of holy thoughts; and finally, an invincible Citadel, and sure retreating place from the violent assaults of all our enemies.

By prayer, (if thou knoweſt how to apply it to its true uſe,) thou putteſt a ſword into thy Lords powerfull hands, wherewith he will fight thy battails for thee, and vanquiſh all enemies which oppoſe thee in thy way of perfection.

Text. Which muſt have theſe properties,

2. But to make thy prayer grateful, uſefull, and acceptable; it muſt be accompanied with theſe conditions, and properties.

1. A deſire to ſerve God.

Firſt, That an ardent deſire to ſerve thy Lord God, in ſuch a manner as may beſt pleaſure his divine Majeſty, doe continually inflame thy heart.

Explication.

How to obtain this inflamed deſire.

TO obtain this inflamed deſire; conſider that thy Lord God, by reaſon of his admirable excellencies,

of goodneſſe, majeſty, wiſedome, beauty, and other infinite perfections; is more than worthy to be ſerved, and honoured, by thee and all creatures. That to ſerve and ſuccour thee, this greatneſſe hath condeſcended to compaſſionate thy weakneſſe; and to ſuffer for thee in his ſacred humanity for thirty three yeares ſpace, during which time he cur'd and ſalv'd thy ſtinking ſores, (which were gangren'd by the foule contagion of ſinne,) not with medicinall oyle, ordinary wine, and common plaiſters; but with the moſt precious balſom of his owne ſacred bloud, and with unguents confected of his pureſt fleſh, torn from his body by ſcourges, thorns and nails. Weigh alſo the importance of this his ſervice, ſince thou art thereby inabled to maſter thy ſelfe, to conquer thine enemies, and to become the child of God,

Text. Secondly, perfect Faith,

Secondly, That thou be poſſeſt with a true and conſtant Faith, whereby thou beleeveſt, that thy loving Lord will give thee all things neceſſary for his ſervice, and thy ſalvation. EXPLI-

Explication.

THis holy Confidence, is the veſſell, which the divine goodneſſe fills with the treaſures of his graces; and the greater it is, the richer, and more laden, will thy prayer return into thine owne boſome: For how can our unchangeable Lord faile to make us partakers of his good gifts and graces, when as himſelf hath commanded us to ask them, and promiſed his holy Spirit to them who petition him for it, with Faith and perſeverance?

Text. Thirdly, Conformity to God's will

Thirdly, that thou haſt no other end in frequenting holy prayer, than the accompliſhing of Gods will and not thine owne; and this as well in asking, as in obtaining. That is, Let nothing move thee to pray, but only that God will have thee pray; neither doe thou deſire to be heard, for any other reaſon, than that thou hopeſt it is his pleaſure: briefly; Let thy intention, and the whole purpoſe of thy prayer be this, That thy will may be conformable to Gods will:

and ſtrive not at all to bend his will or draw it unto thine.

Explication.

Becauſe thy owne will is ſubject to error,

And this thou art to do ſo much the rather, becauſe thy will being infected with *ſelfe-love*, is ſubject to errour, and forgetfulneſſe of it ſelfe, and ſo knows not what it asks: but the divine will is ever accompanied with unſpeakable goodneſſe, and ſo can *never faile*, but is the rule and queen-regent of all other wills, deſerving to be followed and obey'd by them all. Thou art therefore alwayes to petition for thoſe things which are conforme to Gods holy will; and when thou ſuſpecteſt whether ſome deſire of thine be truly ſuch, to make thy demand conditionall; and not to wiſh it, but onely ſo far forth as thy Lord God is well pleaſed thou ſhalt obtain it. In things alſo, which are known to be certainly agreeable to his divine Majeſty, ſuch as are vertues, and graces; thou art to pray for them, rather that thou maiſt by their meanes better pleaſe, ſatisfy and ſerve him, than for

but the divine will is infallibly right.

for any other end or consideration whatsoever, though never so spirituall.

Text. Fourthly, A connexion with the former exercises.

Fourthly, That thy prayer, and the other before-described spirituall exercises, be so joyned together, as that thou undertake not the one, without the practise of the other; For pray thou never so long, and never so much, to obtaine any vertue, unlesse thou also labour, and exercise thy self in the way to get it; thou onely temptest God, but obtainest not thy desire.

Explication.

Fifthly, Thanksgiving for received favours.

Fifthly, remember that before thou demandest new favours, thou art to render humble thanks for them thou hast formerly received, by these or the like expressions: *O my good and gracious Lord God, who hast made me, redeemed me, and rescued me from mine enemies, oftner than I my selfe know or can conceive; succour me now also, and deny not to grant this my present petition, though I have beene hitherto rebellious to thy*

Will, and ungratefull to thy goodneſſe.

And if thy demand be for ſome particular vertue, whereof thou now ſtandeſt in great need, by reaſon of ſome temptation, trouble or contradiction, which urgeth thee; forget not to thank him for that occaſion of thy triall and exerciſe; which through his gracious aſſiſtance, may redound ſo much to thy ſpirituall good.

Sixthly, a reflexion upon Gods goodneſſe, and promiſe; and Chriſts paſſion.

Sixthly, ſince Prayer hath it's whole force, power and hope of obtaining, from Gods goodneſſe and mercy, from Chriſts merits and paſſion, and from the divine promiſe; therefore thou maiſt fitly uſher in thy demands, by ſome of theſe following ſayings: *O my God, graunt unto thy ſervant, I beſeech thee, this grace for thy ſupreme goodneſſe ſake, that thy moſt dear Sonnes merits may impetrate for me the graunt of my petition. Remember ô my Lord, thine owne loving promiſe; and incline thine eares to hear my prayer.* At other times, thou maiſt ask by the merits of the moſt glorious Virgin, and ſuffrages of the Saints; which are powerfull

powerfull to prevaile, in thy pious demands.

Seventhly, Thou art to pray with perseverance; For if the continued importunity of the Evangelicall widdow, inflected the hard-hearted Judge to give her what she asked; how shall perseverant petitions be rejected, by him who is mercy and goodnesse it selfe? Seventhly, Perseverance.

Therefore after thy prayer, strengthen thy soule with a live by *Hope in God*, that (through his infinite love) he will bestow on thee the now-demanded grace or gift, or something that is better for thee, or both together: And although he so long delayes his answer, that thou maist doubt he denyes what thou askest; yet remaine constantly in this hope, and never slacken therefore, either thy prayer, or thy practise, or thy confidence. Text. Prayer must also be strengthned with Hope.

3. Yea though it may seeme to thee that God *rejecteth thee and thy prayer*: Yet doe thou still humble thy selfe more and more before him, encreasing thy *Faith*, and comforting thy self with hope in thy Saviour. And though God seemeth to reject thy prayer, yet persevere knocking.

For the more fervently and frequently thou interposest this constant hope in God, even in such violent repulses, and (as it were) manifest reprobations of thy prayer, the more thou becommest pleasing and gratefull unto him.

And alwayes thanking him, as wel when he grants, as when he denies.

4. And therefore thou art alwaies to return him *gratefull thanks*, whom thou acknowledgest no lesse good, wise and loving in thy behalfe, when he seemes to cast out thy petition, than when he grants it. Keep then an ever-constant, courageous, and joyfull mind, in all events whether good or bad: and humbly submit thy selfe to the infallible wisdome, and all-ordering providence of thy Lord God.

Chap. XXII.

What inward (or mental) prayer is, and what Contemplation: and the use thereof.

1. Mentall prayer includes alwayes,

INward (*or mentall*) *prayer*, Is an elevation of the mind to God: and it alwayes includes, either to an actuall, or virtuall petition of something.

2. Virtuall

2. Virtuall petition is, when the minde is lifted up to God to obtaine some grace from him, shewing him our necessities simply and briefly without any discourse or consideration of any other things: As, when I elevate my mind to God, and confesse before him my weaknesse both to do well, and to defend my selfe from doing evill: This sort of prayer, is properly tearmed *Virtuall*; because when I thus briefly lay my minde open to God, hee well knowes what is there wanting, and how much I stand in neede of his helpe. Either a virtuall Petition of some thing,

Explication.

And this virtually implies, an humble supplication to his Divine Majesty that hee will vouchsafe to supply my necessities. And by how much the more this confession of thine own want and weaknesse is reall and manifest, and thy desire efficacious, and thy confidence lively; by so much also thy demand shall be of more force and value.

3. There is also another kinde of inward Text.

inward *virtuall Prayer*, which consists in a simple beholding or contemplation of God in our minds, And this Prayer is, When we silently desire, and (as it were) put our Lord in remembrance of that grace, wee formerly demanded.

4. Learne, (*O my beloved,*) this way of *Prayer*, and make it familiar unto thee by the frequent use of it: For experience will give thee to understand that it is the best armour of proof against all enemies, adversities and dangers. Have it therefore always in readinesse, that where and whensoever need requires thou mayst make use thereof.

Or an actuall asking by words expressed in the mind.

5. Actuall petition, or actuall inward Prayer is when grace is asked by words expressed in the mind; In this or the like manner: *Give me, O my Lord God, this grace, this benefit, for the honour of thy most sacred name:* Or thus, *I steadfastly beleeve, O my God, that it is thy holy will I should begg of thee this grace which I stand in need of: Do thou therefore, O my God, accomplish thine own pleasure in me.*

6. Thus also thou maist present before

before Gods Divine Majesty, thine enemy which annoyes thee, or thy sinnes which afflict thee, joyning therewith thine owne weakneſſe to reſiſt them: and ſay; *O Lord, looke upon thine owne creature, made by thy holy hands, and redeemed by thy pretious blood: behold alſo thine enemy and mine, outragiouſly reaching at mee, and ſtriving to take mee from thee, and teare mee in peeces. O my God, to thee I onely fly, In thee onely I truſt. Conſider my weakneſſe, and mine enemies ſtrength; who will infallibly ſubject mee to his tyranny, if I am left deſtitute of thy powerfull protection.*

Chap. XXIII.

How wee may joyne Contemplation to this inward Prayer.

1. IF ſometimes thou art willing to ſettle thy ſelfe to mentall Prayer for a certaine ſpace of time, *as an houre, or more*; thou mayſt joyn to this way of Prayer, certaine Meditations upon the *Life and Death* of our Saviour Chriſt, applying alwayes

Take ſome points of Chriſts Death or Paſſion.

alwayes his Actions to that vertue thou then demandeſt, and ſo meditating upon them both together.

2. For example: *Patience* is the vertue thou art now in queſt of; chooſe therefore for the ſubject of thy Meditation, ſome myſtery of Chriſts Crucifixion; As, how cruelly hee was deſpoiled of his garments, which were barbarouſly rent from his Body, carrying away part of his ſacred Fleſh which cleaved faſt unto them: With what outcries, and curſes, they crowne and uncrowne him with Thornes, iterating againe and againe that terrible torment: How this moſt innocent Lamb was faſtened with Nayles to the wood of the Croſſe, and lifted up into the Ayre, with unſpeakable griefe of his Wounds, and new anguiſh of his whole Body: And ſo of other the like points.

And apply his actions to the vertue thou demandeſt;

As for example to Patience.

3. And in theſe conſiderations, *firſt* apply thy ſenſes to feele, ſee, &c. the paine which thy deare Saviour endured in theſe paſſages in all the Members of his ſacred Humanity: *Then* elevating thy heart to his holy Soule, penetrate into his Patience and

and Meekneſſe, and ſee how pleaſantly hee paſſeth over theſe ſo great and grievous afflictions: and how ready hee is, for his Fathers ſatisfaction and our ſalvation, to ſuffer much more and farre greater torments: *After this*, behold him hanging on his Croſſe, and compleating his ſufferings by his Death: ſtand thou cloſe to him and contemplate him, and thinke with what an ardent deſire hee did all this for thee, that thou by his example might'ſt learne to endure with patience, thy ſmaller adverſities for his honour. And as hee turned himſelfe to his Heavenly Father, and prayed for thee; ſo thou ſhouldſt implore his Grace to beare and overcome this Croſſe thou now groaneſt under, and all other thy grievances, with quiet of minde, and conſtancy of reſolution.

Mark how meekly hee ſuffered, and learne thereby to ſuffer patiently thy ſmaller adverſities.

Of Reſolution.

4. And *Laſtly*, compell thy will to conſent to theſe ſufferings; And ſpeake to it, to take up this Croſſe quietly, and cary it on conſtantly: Then turne thee to God thy Heavenly Father, and humbly beg of him the vertue of *Patience*; and that he will be pleaſed to hear the perfect

And compell thy will, to take up thy Croſſe quietly.

Prayer

Prayer of his own dear Son, powred out on the *Crosse* for thee.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of another certaine manner of Prayer, by way of Meditation.

1. THere is yet another manner of *Praying and Meditating together*; As thus: Having attentively and seriously considered upon thy Saviours bitter Passion, sustained for thy sake, and to save thy soule; apply thine own senses (as aforesaid) and endeavour to feel (as it were) the like dolours in thy selfe: and let thy thoughts pierce into the promptitude of mind wherewith Christ thy Saviour suffered all this.

To pray and meditate together,

2. And having weighed his exceeding pains and his exact patience; proceed to these two following considerations: *First*, of the treasure of Christs Merits: and *Secondly*, of the high content and good liking, which his heavenly Father took in his deare Sons perfect obedience. *Then*,

By considering Christ Merits, & the content his Heavenly Father took in his obedience.

3. Having fill'd thy minde with these pious points of Meditation; produce

produce them, and preſent them to thy Lord God; and beg by vertue of theſe that grace which thou ſtandeſt in greateſt need of. And thus thou mayſt put up thy Petitions, not only in meditating upon any myſtery of *Chriſts paſſion*; but alſo upon any internall or externall *action* of his.

And preſenting them both to God.

CHAP. XXV.

Of a Way of praying by the Interceſſion of the Bleſſed Virgin.

1. THere is yet, (beſides theſe foregoing methods of Prayer and Meditation,) *another way*, by the means of the moſt glorious and ever-bleſſed *Virgin*, and Mother of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Which thou mayſt thus eaſily practiſe: *Firſt*, fix thy mind and meditation upon God the Eternall Father; *then* upon Jeſus Chriſt his deare Son and our ſweet Saviour; and *laſtly* upon *Mary*, the ever-bleſſed Virgin-Mother.

Firſt; fix thy minde and meditation upth'eternall Father.

2. In thy meditation of the *Eternall Father*, take theſe two points for thy ſubject, and offer them up to

to his Divine Majesty: *First*, the great liking and content hee had in himselfe from all eternity, concerning this perfect creature the Virgin, before she had a being: *Secondly*, the wonders hee wrought in her, and the content he took in her, when she was borne into the World.

Considering the content he had in himselfe (concerning her) from all eternity;

3. And as for the *first* of these considerations; Soare aloft, and exalt thy thoughts beyond all time, and above each thing created, penetrating the very eternity of the Deity; and then consider what celebrity of joy and delight the Divine Majesty had within himselfe, concerning this *sacred Virgin* and her high perfections: And there finding thy Lord amidst these joyes and delights, lay hold of the opportunity, and addresse thy Petition unto him with full hope and confidence, that for this his great joys sake, hee will impart bountifully some Grace, Strength and Courage unto thee, whereby thou mayst be enabled to encounter and conquer thine enemies, especially this vice which now chiefly tempts and troubles thee.

4. Hence proceede to the consi-

deration

deration of thoſe admirable vertues, great gifts, and ſingular graces, conferr'd upon this moſt *glorious Virgin*; and ſometimes preſent the whole bulke of them to the view of the eternall Father; other-times chooſe out ſome particular perfection to lay open before him: imploring and intreating for his owne boundleſſe goodneſſe ſake, and in reſpect of theſe vertues and merits of this his dearly beloved Spouſe, that hee will graciouſly heare, and mercifully grant what thou ſo greatly needeſt.

And the wonders he wrought in her, when ſhee had a being.

5. Then turne thy thoughts towards the *Sonne of God*, our Lord Jeſus; and repreſent before him the ſacred wombe of his Virgin-Mother, which encloſed and carried him for nine moneths ſpace: as alſo the ſingular reverence wherewith ſhee received him from her wombe into her boſome, when he firſt appeared in the World; aſſiſting him and acknowledging him true man, and adoring him as eternall God; as her own poore child, and as her powerfull Creatour: Put him further in minde, of her eyes of compaſſion towards his poverty; of her ſacred

Secondly, upon God the Son.

Armes

Armes which ſo often embraced him; her Kiſſes, wherewith ſhee cheriſh'd him; her Milk wherewith ſhee nouriſh'd him; her labours ſuffered for him all his life time, and her dolours at his Death: by which and the like relations from the deare Mother, thou ſhalt uſe (as it were) a certaine violence to her beloved Son, to grant thy Petition.

Laſtly come to the ſacred Virgin.

6. Laſtly, come to the *ſacred Virgin* her ſelfe; lay open before her, her owne privileges, prerogatives and perfections; how ſhee onely, amongſt all Virgins and Women, was eſpecially elected by the eternall, Power, Prudence, and Goodneſſe of God, to be a Mother of Grace and of pitty; to be an aſſiſtant and advocate of all mankinde; and that (next to her dearly beloved Sons humanity) wee can apply our ſelves to none but her, for better ſupplies of our neceſſities, or truer ſolace in our ſorrowes, or greater hopes of happineſſe. Tell her alſo of that true and tryed ſaying; that no one did ever faithfully call upon her, who received not a mercifull anſwer, and preſent aſſiſtance by her holy Prayer and

and Patronage. Laſtly, put before her eyes all her Sons ſorrowes and ſufferings upon Earth; and beg of her for his ſweet ſake, for his onely honour, and for his glory, that thou mayſt impetrate by her pious interceſſion the effect of this thy Petition, which that thou mightſt obtaine, he patiently underwent his ſo bitter Death and Paſſion.

Chap. XXVI.

How to pray and meditate by means of the holy Angels, and Heavenly Citizens.

1. ANother powerfull meanes to obtaine thy Petition, is by the *Angels* and bleſſed *Saints* in Heaven: which is alſo practiſed two manner of ways. *Firſt*, apply thy thoughts to the Eternall Father; and preſent before him the Love, Honour and Praiſe, wherewith his Heavenly Court worſhips and exalts him: and *withall* lay open all the miſeries, labours and moleſtations, which his Saints ſuffered, and by his grace ſurmounted, here upon Earth.

First, addreſſe thy ſelfe to the eternall Father.

2. The

Next unto the glorious Angels and Saints themselves,

2. The *other way* is, by applying thy selfe to these glorious spirits, as to them who not onely remember us amidst their joys, but earnestly desire our perfection: beg therefore their faithfull assistance in thy fight against vices; and sometimes implore their ayd and assistance at the houre of thy Death, against thy dreadfull enemies.

3. *Other times*, reflect upon those excellent gifts and graces, wherewith their Lord God indued them; exciting in thy soule a lively feeling of love and joy, that they possesse these high perfections, as much, yea more, than if they were thine owne, since such was the good will and pleasure of the Divine Majesty.

Dividing them into Quires, according to the days of the weeke.

4. And that thou mayst more easily and orderly performe and practise this pious exercise; divide the Quires of this blessed company, according to the week-days, in some such manner, as followeth.

Upon *Sunday*, meditate upon the nine Quires of Angels.

Upon *Monday*, of the holy Apostles.

Upon *Tuesday*, of the glorious Martyrs.

Upon

Upon *Wednesday*, of the blessed Bishops.

Upon *Thursday*, of the holy Doctors.

Upon *Friday*, of the holy Confessours.

Upon *Saturday*, of the sacred Virgins.

5. But let no day passe, without some speciall devotion to the most glorious *Virgin Mary*; to thy *Proper-Angel*; and to that particular *Saint* and Patron, to whom thou owest singular duty and Veneration.

But every day praying to the B. Virgin, To thy particular Patron,

Explication.

Amongst which I perswade thee to place S. *Joseph*, the deare Spouse of the sacred Virgin; who (as experience, and contemplative persons testify,) will assist thee by his holy Prayers, in all thy temporall and spirituall necessities; and particularly advance and direct thy Soul in its spirituall Exercises of Prayer and Contemplation: And surely if our loving Lord, so highly esteemes his other Saints, because they yielded him his due honour and obedience upon

And to S. *Joseph*.

upon earth ; how much more doth hee value this moſt humble and happy *Saint* ; and how prevalent are his prayers like to be, with that Divine Sonne, who honoured, ſerved, and obey'd him upon Earth, as his Father?

CHAP. XXVII.

How to meditate upon the holy Croſſe, and Chriſt our Saviour hanging thereon, to excite and move our affections.

1. I Have before ſhewed thee, (*O my dearly beloved*) the manner of meditating and praying upon our Saviours *Paſſion*: now I will inſtruct thee how thou mayſt thereby ſtirre up good motions and enkindle holy affections in thy ſoule. When therefore thou haſt taken ſome Article of Meditation, upon Chriſts Croſſe and Paſſion; (as for example, Of his *Crowne of Thornes*,) thinke thus with thy ſelfe: How thy moſt innocent and amiable *Lord Jeſus*, was (with greateſt deriſion and ſcorne) cloathed in a purple coat, crowned with

How to enkindle holy affections in meditating on the Paſſion.

with sharp Thorns, cudgelled with a hard Cane, besmeared with filthy spittle. How this King of eternall glory, whom millions of Angels adore in Heaven, was by the worst and wickedest sort of men, mocked upon Earth, as a counterfeit King with scoffing Adoration and Reverence.

2. Now when by these, and such other points of Meditation, thou desirest to raise in thy soule the true feelings and *affections of Love*; elevate thy heart often-times whilst thou art meditating, to acknowledge the boundlesse goodnesse of thy Lord God, and his love towards thee: which thou mayst easily gather, from the multitude and the bitternesse of his sufferings for thee. By this acknowledgement of his Goodnesse, thy love will be more and more inflamed; and a true contrition for thy sinnes will bee more easily obtained: especially if thou considerest, that thou hast againe and againe offended this thy most bountifull and loving Lord God, who was thus cruelly slaine formerly for the Ransome of thine iniquity.

By reflection upon Christs Love and goodnesse.

How to get a constant hope,

3. To raise also a constant *hope* in thy soule; looke upon thy Lord Jesus, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, reduced into the extremity of misery, to free thee from the slavery of Sinne and snares of Satan, to reconcile thee to his Heavenly Father, and to give thee confidence to come to him cheerfully in all thy necessities.

And a spirituall joy,

4. And if furthermore, thou wouldst by these Meditations on thy Saviours passion, move thy selfe to *spirituall joy*; warn thy thoughts from remaining any longer upon his pains, and passe to the profits, fruits, and effects of his sufferings: There thou wilt finde thy selfe and the whole World absolved from thy sinnes by them, the Divine wrath appeased, the Devill defeated, Death conquered, the lost sheep reduced, the Angels seats supplied. Joyne to all this, the Joy of the sacred Trinity, and of the whole Church both triumphant and militant, who all rejoyce in the profit issuing from Christs cruell Death and Passion.

As also affections of sorrow and compassion,

5. But to raise affections of *sorrow* and compassion towards thy sufferi[n]g

suffering Saviour; thou maist weigh, not onely the many wounds of his sacred body; but the multitude of anguishes, griefs, & sadnesses of his most holy soul. For he well knowing the eminent and infinite dignity of his heavenly Father, (whom he so highly loved,) must needs be grieved above measure, to see this benigne and bountiful Creatour of all things, after so many and so great benefits, to be so rashly, so maliciously, and so frequently offended, and deluded, by his owne creatures.

6. And this *sadnesse* of thy Saviours soule, was much augmented by the foresight he had of that vast multitude of men, who by their owne sinne and sloath, were to be damned eternally.

The same *grief* was further aggravated, by seeing the immense dolours of his deare and worthily beloved mother; and the same sword spared not his, which pierced her heart with sorrow. Moreover, Christs sacred soule, which was all-knowing (by reason of the divine union) suffered in all the Martyrs and tender Virgins torments, sustained for his faith and affection.

And acts of contrition for thy sinnes.

7. In these and the like meditations upon thy Lord and Saviours passion, thou must often reflect, that thou by thy grievous sins and defects, wert the cause and occasion of these his afflictions: and from hence, conceive acts of true *sorrow* for thy shamefull ingratitude, and humble thy selfe at the feet of his Majesty. And know *that* to be the best pleasing and most acceptable compassion, when thou persecutest thine owne disordered affections, and strivest to ruine those enemies, and root them out of thy heart, which were the cause of thy Lords so cruel pains and passion.

With a perfect hatred of them.

8. And to move thee to a perfect *hatred of thy sinne*; think seriously in running over all these points of thy dear Saviours passion, as if all these his sufferings were for no other cause, than to stir thee up to detest all sinne, and destroy thy unruly passions and affections: them especially, which most endommage, defile, and distract thy selfe, and most displease thy Saviour.

9. Lastly, That by these meditations upon Christs death and passion, thou

thou maist be moved to the *admiration* of his goodnesse: Consider attentively, *First*, Who he is that suffereth these things? Surely, the onely Sonne of the Almighty God; who to save thee, came from heaven and became man. *Secondly*, For whom he suffered? Surely, for us poor worms, the works of his owne hands, and who always are prone to offend him. *Thirdly*, By whom he suffered? Surely, By the vild and vulgar crew, and the very refuse of all nations. *Fourthly*, What he suffered? Surely, disgraces, contumelies, contempts, wounds and torments, more than can be named or imagined. *Fifthly*, How he suffered all this? Surely, with a most patient, meek, and willing mind; neither shewing any signe of distast, nor speaking any word of reproch, against his most ungratefull and malicious persecutors; but like an innocent lamb led on to the slaughter, he complained not of their violence, and his owne sufferings; but laid down his life, his heart remaining full of sweetnesse. *Sixthly*, When and where he suffered? Surely, at

And to admire Gods goodnesse: by considering 6. circumstances.
1. Who suffereth?
2. For whom?
3. By whom?
4. What?
5. How?
6. When & where?

at the time of their Paſchall ſolemnity, and in their prime and ſacred City, and in the preſence of his deareſt mother, and finally in the view, as it were, of the whole world.

Explication.

A further Declaration of the profit which may be drawn from the meditation upon Chriſts Paſſion, and particularly of the imitation of his vertues.

The firſt profit, is a confuſion at the ſight of our imperfections.

AMongſt the infinity of *profits* which may be drawn from this holy exerciſe, *One is*; that thou muſt needs conceive, not onely a ſorrow for thy ſins paſt, but feel alſo a ſhame and confuſion in thy ſoule, to ſee that thoſe unruly paſſions, which put Chriſt Jeſus to death upon the Croſſe, doe yet lurk and live within thy heart.

The ſecond, a deſire and demand of pardon,

The *other main profit* which flowes from the former, is; that being truly ſenſible of thy ſinnes, and aſhamed of thine Ingratitude, thou wilt hear-

tily

tily desire, and humbly demand pardon for what is past, and grace to amend for the future: And for an acknowledgment of thy extraordinary obligation, for thy Saviours sufferings undergone for thy sake, thou wilt resolve to serve him, love him, and suffer for him hereafter. with a resolution of amendment.

The *third profit*, is; that thou wilt fall out with thy perverse inclinations and passions, and persecute them to death, be they never so little. The third, a persecution of our passions.

The *fourth*, is; that thou wilt force thy selfe to the utmost of thy power, to imitate the virtues of thy deare Saviour; who endured all this, not onely to save thee, and satisfy for thy Sinnes; but also to give thee an example to follow his sacred steps. The fourth, an imitation of Christs vertues.

Another way to meditate on the Passion.

And now (*my beloved*,) I will here declare unto thee another *method* of meditating upon Christs passion, which thou maist make use of, as thy devotion and occasion shall suggest unto thee. If thou desirest (for ex-

ample) to obtain *patience*, in imitation of thy Redeemer; consider these points following:

By considering,

First, What the afflicted soule of thy Saviour doth towards his heavenly Father.

Secondly, What the Father doth towards this soule of his Sonne.

Thirdly, What this soule doth towards it selfe, and its sacred body.

Fourthly, What doth thy Saviour towards thee.

Fifthly, What shouldst thou doe towards thy Saviour.

First, how Christs soule carries it selfe towards his heavenly Father.

First therefore, Consider how the soule of Jesus Christ being totally intentive upon God; Is amazed to behold this infinite and incomprehensible Majesty, in respect whereof all things created are as a pure nothing; submitted, (though immutable in his glory,) to the sufferance of such unworthy usages upon earth, for man; from whom he never received any thing but disloyalty and injuries: And how it afterwards adores, thanks, and offers up it self intirely to the disposition of the divinity.

Secondly, how the Father towards him.

Secondly, Consider how God willeth and exciteth the soule of thy Saviour,

viour, to suffer for thy sake all those blowes, buffets, scourges, spittles, blasphemies, thorns, and death upon the Crosse; giving him to know, how well it pleaseth him, to see him thus repleniſhed with all sorts of affronts and afflictions.

Thirdly, passing on to the soule of thy Saviour Christ, Consider, how with his understanding (which is all light) knowing how highly his passion pleased God; and with his will (which is all fire) loving the divine Majesty beyond measure, which thus invited him to suffer for thee; he disposeth himself, readily, joyfully, & contentedly to obey his sacred will and pleasure: And who can dive into the depths of those desires which this pure and loving soule of thy Saviour had to suffer for thy sake? It found it selfe, as it were, in a Labyrinth of troubles; casting about to encounter new wayes of sufferings: and therefore freely gave up it selfe, and it's innocent body, as a prey to the pleasure, and cruelty, of the most lewd and worst sort of villains. Thirdly, how the soule towards it selfe, and its sacred body.

Fourthly, Consider in the next place thy sweet Saviour, amidst his Fourthly, how thy Saviour

carryes himselfe towards thee.

bitter torments, fixing his eyes full of teares and tenderneſſe upon thee; and conceive thou heareſt him thus expoſtulating with thee: *Behold, my Child, whither thy immoderate deſires, and unmortified affections have brought me; becauſe thou wouldeſt not uſe a little violence to thy ſelfe: See, and conſider, how much, and how willingly I ſuffer for thy love, and to give thee a pattern of perfect patience: I beg of thee, (ô my deare child;) and I conjure thee by all theſe my ſufferings and ſorrows, that thou wilt willingly embrace, and cheerfully carry this Croſſe, and any other which I ſhall think fit to lay upon thy ſhoulders; and that thou abandon thy ſelfe intirely into ſuch hands as I ſhall permit to perſecute thee in body or fame, how vile, contemptible, and cruel ſoever they be. O, didſt thou but conceive the greatneſſe of the comfort I ſhould receive in this thy patience and courage! But thou mayſt read it in theſe my wounds, wherein my love to thee is written in bloody characters, and which I willingly receive, as ſo many precious pearles to enrich thy poore ſoule with all ſorts of vertues and perfections,*

perfections, because I love it above all things created: And if I thy Lord and Creatour am redact'd to this extremity for thy love; why, (ô my deare Spouse) wilt thou not consent to endure a little to satisfie my hearts desire, to supple my wounds, and to mitigate these my pains, caused by thy impatience, which more afflicts my soule, than these grievous torments doe my body?

Fifthly, Consider well who he is that speakes thus unto thee, and thou wilt find that he is the King of glory, Iesus Christ, true God and true Man: Mark also the greatnesse of his grief, the variety of his torments, and the manner and indignity of his disgraces, too bad for the worst of men, or most infamous malefactor in the world: Yet thou seest thy Saviour amidst all these affronts and afflictions, not onely unmoveable, mild, and patient; but even joyfull and content, as if hee now kept his marriage-banquet: And as a little water, rather strengthens than extinguishes a full kindled fire; so by the increase of his torments, (which were small in respect of his excessive

Fifthly, how thou shouldst carry thy selfe towards thy Saviour.

sive love,) his content and desire of suffering farre greater, was more and more enkindled and augmented: Consider further, that he endured all this by no externall violence, nor for any self-interest; but (as he told thee) for thy love, and that thou mightst imitate him, andexercise thy selfe in the vertue of patience: And then penetrating into that which he desires thou shouldest doe, and into the content thou shouldest afford him by this thy practice of patience; produce acts of a passionate will, to beare not onely this Crosse patiently and joyfully, but any greater; that so thou maist imitate him more perfectly, and content him more abundantly.

And imprinting in thy mind a lively image of these his sufferings, and of his constancy therein; be ashamed to thinke thy patience so much as a shadow of his, or that thy affections are really any at all, being compared with his; and tremble that the least thought of not enduring for the love of thy Lord, should remaine in thy heart.

Thy Crucified Jesus, (*my beloved,*)

is the best book thou canst read in; and the liveliest image thou canst look upon, to draw the perfect pourtrait of all vertue: For it being the book of life, it not onely informs thy understanding by words, but also inflames thy will by example: The world is full of books, yet all of them together cannot so speedily and perfectly teach the true means of obtaining all vertues, as doth the right contemplation of Christ upon his Crosse: But they who imploy much time in deploring their Saviours passion, and admiring his patience, and apply it not at all to their particular practice when occasions are offered; doe like unto those Souldiers, who before the skirmish, talk of great matters, and speak high words in their tents; but at the first sight of the appearing enemy, they take a fright, quit their colours, cast down their armes, and utterly forsake the field. And indeed, what thing can be more silly, cowardly, and unworthy, than to contemplate, as in a most cleare glasse, the vertues of our Lord and Saviour, loving them, and admiring them

Christ crucified is the best book to read in,

And to learne all vertues,

If thou makest fit applications to thy particular practise.

them; and presently to forget them, and disesteeme them, as soone as any occasion is presented wherein to exercise our selves in their imitation.

Chap. XXVIII.

Of sensible devotion; as also of spirituall drinesse, and dereliction.

1. Sensible devotion, proceeds sometimes from *a naturall inclination*; sometimes from the *Devil*; and sometimes from *Gods grace*: And by the fruits of it, thou maist best judge from which of these springs it issueth: For if thence thou art no whit moved to amendment of life; thou maist justly feare it comes either from thy enemy, or from thy owne nature; and the more sweetnesse thou feelest, the more shouldst thou be suspicious whence it floweth.

Devotion is best known by the effects it produceth.

2. When therefore thy soule is replenished with *spirituall sweetnesse*, question not whence it commeth, nor adhere much unto it; but still stick stedfastly to the acknowledge-

How to make profit of all spirituall sweetnesse in devotion.

ment

ment of thine owne baseness, abstracting thy heart from all other delights or desires, than onely that which it takes in God, and his good pleasure. Thus, will these short sweetnesses, whether they spring from thy owne nature, or thine enemies suggestion, be truly turned to thy comfort and profit.

3. Dryness in like manner, or desolation of the soule, may proceed either out of our owne naturall defect, or from the Devil, or from God. Three causes of spirituall dryness.

From the *Devil*; who thereby The Devill. strives to render the soule tepid, and tedious in her spirituall exercises; and so to draw her by degrees to leave them, and looke after earthly solaces.

From our *selves*; Either because Our selves. we stand in feare of our selves by reason of our sinnes, or because we are negligent in the practice of our devotions.

From *God*; who therefore permits this dryness, to excite us to more diligence, and abstract us from all other cares and curiosities, but them onely which concern our Creator, God.

tour, or have ſome relation unto his honour, or our own perfection: Or finally, to teach us, not to truſt or reſt in ſpirituall joyes, but to depend wholly on his holy will and pleaſure: As that reſigned ſoule did, which ſaid: *Our Lord gave, our Lord hath taken away, as it hath pleaſed him ſo it is done.* Job 1.21.

4. When therefore thou feeleſt this *dryneſſe* of devotion, enter into thy ſelfe and ſearch out the *cauſe* thereof; and having found it, fight againſt it; not to recover that ſenſible ſweetneſſe of grace, but to expell farre from thee whatſoever is diſpleaſing to the divine Majeſty. Search out the true cauſe thereof,

5. And let it be thy continuall care, to keepe on thy accuſtomed practices of piety, notwithſtanding this dryneſſe in thy ſoule; yea, though thou ſeemeſt to labour in vaine, yet proſecute them with greater diligence, and drinke of that bitter potion of deſolation with a prompt and peaceable reſolution; and if it be ſo mingled with the thick dreggs of a troubled minde, that thou knoweſt not how to ſwallow it, nor which way to turne thee; And keep on thy accuſtomed practices of piety.

yet

yet perſevere with alacrity, and ſit ſolitarily thus deſerted, under the ſhadow of the holy Croſſe, ſeeking no outward ſolace, though the whole world ſhould offer it, or any creature afford it thee. And ſeek no outward comforts.

6. For thou arr to conceale this Croſſe of thine from all perſons, except thy ghoſtly Father, to whom thou art faithfully to diſcover it; not to have comfort from him, but counſell, how to carry thy ſelfe during this dryneſſe, conformable to the divine pleaſure and good liking. Nor pray to have it mitigated.

7. Nor art thou to make uſe of the holy *Communion*, *Prayer*, or any other *ſpirituall exerciſe* with intention to have the leaſt mitigation of thy adverſities; but only that thy good God will give thee ſtrength of ſpirit, to ſupport thy Croſſe with patience. And if through trouble and diſtraction, thou canſt hardly make uſe of thine underſtanding in thy meditations; keepe onely a willing minde to doe it, and ſupply it with jaculatory prayers, and frequent elevations of thy mind to thy Lord God.

EXPLI-

Explication.

IN this case, thou maist make use of these or the like sacred sentences: *My heart is troubled within me, my strength hath forsaken me, and the light of my eyes is not with me.* Ps.37.11.

Lord I suffer violence, answer for me. Esay.38.14.

Return, return, ô my beloved, let me heare thy voice. Cant.6.

How long shall I consider in my self, and have griefe in my heart all the day? Psal.13.3.

Why, ô Lord, art thou gone farre off, and despisest in opportunities, in tribulation? Psal.10.1.

Pardon me, that I may have some refreshing, before I goe hence, and shall be no more. Psal.38.14.

O my God, my God, why hast thou left me? Psal.22.9.

Or thou maist say: *O my Lord, ô my love! where, where dost thou leave thy poore servant thus all alone, who hath no comfort in himselfe, and desires none from any creature? O what shall he doe, if he findes it not in thee? Whither wilt thou goe, poore stray'd sheep,*

if

if thou heareſt not the voice of thy divine ſhepheard? O living fountaine! ô ſource of all ſweetneſſe! ſhall I never more become worthy to taſt one onely dropp of thy delights? To whom ſhall I have recourſe, if thou, my God, and onely refuge, keepeſt aloof from me? O unlimited bounty! When ſhall I have a lively feeling of thy effects? How is it poſſible for my dry ſoule to ſubſiſt in this deſert earth, being deprived, ô my God, of thy heavenly dewes?

In thy deſolation, remember how thy Saviour was left comfortleſſe on the Croſſe.

When thou findeſt thy ſelfe thus abandoned; remember how thy deare Saviour was alſo left comfortleſſe by the ſame heavenly Father, in the Garden, upon the Croſſe and in his greateſt afflictions; Therefore pronounce with him oftentimes thoſe hard words; *Fiat voluntas tua, Thy holy will be done*: which proceeding from the depth of thy heart, will ſweetly wound the heart of thy Lord God, and move him to compaſſionate thy miſery, either by ſending thee comfort, or giving thee courage, conſtancy, and reſignation, to endure it.

8. For know aſſuredly, that to doe Text.

or

For, to suffer for God, is the best prayer, and makes thee truly devout.

or suffer for Gods honour, is to him the most acceptable prayer; And therefore to endure this dryneſſe with perfect patience, and humble reſignation; makes thee truly devout; becauſe true devotion conſiſts in no other thing, than to have a ready will to follow Chriſt thy Lord, with thy croſſe on thy ſhoulder, whither, and which way hee pleaſeth; having and deſiring God, only for God; and ſometimes leaving God for God.

And not ſenſible devotion.

9. If therefore ſpirituall perſons, eſpecially *Religious men and Women*, would ſeeriouſly examine and meaſure their progreſſe in the way of perfection and piety, by this Rule; and not by the feeling of ſenſible devotion, (which many doe chiefly regard;) they ſurely would make better uſe of ſenſible comforts in their exerciſes of devotion; which their loving Lord affords, to make them more zealous in ſubmitting to his ſacred will; which diſpoſeth all things, in order to our ſalvation and benefit.

Wherein many are deceived.

10. And in this alſo many are much deceived, that when they are troubled

troubled with impure and perverse thoughts, they presently become fearfull and faint-hearted, and as if God had utterly forsaken them, thinke it impossible that his holy Spirit should inhabit a heart so troubled and tormented. And they so intricate themselves in these fancies, till by degrees they fall into a grievous dislike of themselves, and lastly into a certain dangerous despaire. Which they no sooner apprehend in themselves, but they presently run to their wonted wayes, to recover their quiet. But hereby they shew themselves little gratefull to God; who therfore permits them to be thus troubled and tempted, to bring them to the cleare knowledge of their owne nothing; that so, as wretched, frail, and desolate creatures, they may more seriously seeke him, and more diligently draw near him.

What thou art to do in this distresse.

11. Wherefore, (*ô my beloved,*) that which thou must doe in such a distresse, is this: Enter straight into a profound reflection upon thine own baseness, and there humble thy self, and confesse thy peevish affections

ctions and paſſions, and acknowledg thy proneſſe to fall, (if left to thy ſelfe,) into all manner of wickedneſſe; and that without thy loving Lords care and cuſtody, helpe and defence, thou wouldſt be caſt downe headlong incontinently.

12. This done, raiſe thy heart with a good hope, and confidence in thy Creatour; ſeeing it is hee only who permitted thee to fall into this adverſity, that thou might'ſt take hold of the occaſion to draw neerer unto him by humble prayer; and therefore thou art obliged to render gratefull thanks to his divine Majeſty, for theſe-like troubles and temptations. And take this as a certainty: That all ſuch perverſe thoughts are ſooner expelled with meeke ſufferance and patience, than with much ſolicitude and ſtudy.

CHAP.

Chap. XXIX.

That the worthy frequenting of the most Blessed Sacrament, is an efficacious meanes to conquer our passions.

1. The sacred *Communion*, or most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, is received by devout Christians for divers ends. But if thou desirest to take it, for the particular strengthning of thy soule against the assaults of evill inclinations; attend to what I shall now teach thee.

2. The day before thou intendest to *communicate*; meditate, if thy leasure give thee leave, of the great desire thy dear Saviour hath to unite himselfe to thee by the meanes of this Sacrament, and thereby to root out thy vitious affections. For this his desire is so immense, that no created understanding can comprehend it.

Meditate the day before thy Communion, of thy Saviours desire, &c. to come to thee;

3. But that thou maist have a small glimps thereof, consider these two things:

First, What pleasure our Lord takes to dwell in us; since the holy Scripture

My delights are to be with the children of men. Scripture *calls this his delights*; and in requitall of this love, he *only requires our hearts*. *Secondly*, how much he hateth our sinnes, which hinder his nearer union with us, and are directly opposite to his incomparable perfections. For he being the onely and chief good, the purest light, and most perfect beauty, cannot but detest that which is meer darkneſſe, frailty, and the corruption and Canker of our wretched ſoules.

Child, give me thy heart.

And how much he hateth ſin.

4. And that this loving deſire of thy dear Lord, may take yet deeper impreſſion in thy mind; meditate often of his mervailous works related in the Old and New Teſtament; eſpecially of his moſt bitter *Paſſion* and cruell *death*; which he did expreſly ſuffer to deliver thy ſoul from ſinne; and to cleanſe it from ſuch affections, as are contrary to his divine Majeſty. Concerning which point, all the illuminated Doctours of Gods Church, doe unanimouſly conclude and teach; That Chriſt our Saviour would againe, if it were needfull, expoſe himſelfe to a thouſand deaths, to free us from the leaſt evill paſſion or affection.

5. By

5. By such considerations, thou wilt easily gather the great desire thy deare Saviour hath to dwell with thee: and from thence conclude, how fitting it is that thou shouldst reciprocally stirre up in thy selfe an ardent affection to receive and entertain him: Which thou mayst do by these and the like jaculatory prayers: *Come, ô my Lord, and my love; helpe thy caitif creature to conquer her enemies. When, ô when (my deare spouse,) will that happy hour come, that I may receive thee, the bread of life; and being comforted and encouraged by thee, may fully conquer my selfe, and totally subdue my owne evill passions, and disordered affections?*

And move thy soul to a reciprocall desire and affection towardshim.

6. And when thou art hightned with the hope of thy sweet Saviours comming into thy soule, then provoke thy passions to battaile; call up thy affections, and curb them againe and againe with perfect hatred and disdaine; and this done, produce acts and desires of the vertues which are opposite to these vices: And let this be thy evenings entertainment, and mornings employment.

And then provoke thy passions to battail.

I. 7. But

Being near the time of Communion thou art to fear,

7. But when the *hour* of ſacred communion draws neare; think ſeriouſly of thine owne faults, failings, and unfaithfulneſſe to thy Lord God, ſince the time of thy laſt approach to the ſacred table; for which ingratitude and unworthineſſe, thou trembleſt with fear and confuſion before his dread Majeſty: But then againe, encourage and comfort thy ſelfe with the conſideration of his goodneſſe, his readineſſe to pardon, and his inclination to mercy; and with a pious confidence, that he will have thee receive him, notwithſtanding thine own indignity; go on with alacrity of ſpirit to the holy banquet, and joyfully embrace thy Lord God in thy ſoul.

But alſo to have courage and cõfidence.

After Communion diſcover thy wants.

8. The *Sacred Communion* thus performed, preſently ſhut up thy ſelf within the cloſet of thine own heart, and diſcover to thy Saviour thy wants, and thy weakneſſe; ſaying in thy mind: *Thou ſeeſt, ô my ſweet Saviour, how I am poſſeſſed with this paſſion, and poſtred with this perverſe affection. Thou alſo well knoweſt, ô my Lord, my weakneſſe to reſiſt it, and that ô: is not paſſible for me by my owne di-*

ligence

ligence to be delivered: Therefore this battaile is thine; I resigne this my quarrell against these enemies into thy powerfull hands; and from thee alone I look for the victory.

9. After thou hast thus silently prayed, turn thy selfe to the eternall Father, and piously present his deare *Sonne Jesus* unto him, for the same effect for which thou now receivedst him into thy soule: And expect with constant hope his divine helpe, which although thou presently perceivest not, yet thou shalt infallibly and plentifully receive, when it shall be most expedient for thee. And constantly hope for the divine helpe.

CHAP. XXX.

How to excite in us the affections of love, by the sacred Communion.

1. IF thou desirest to stirre up in thy soule, by meanes of this most *holy Sacrament*, that fervent love of thy Lord God which destroyes and consumes all self-will, and selfe-love within thee: Settle thy selfe, in the *evening* which precedes thy communion, to meditate upon thy Lords

Consider Gods love and liberality.

immense love and liberality, towards thee unworthy wretch, the worke of his owne hands; how not content to have formed thee of nothing to his image and likenesse; and to have sent his onely Sonne from heaven to inhabit our earth, and to serve thee for the space of three and thirty yeares in continuall labours and travails, and lastly to undergoe his most bitter passion, and ignominious death for thy redemption: He would further bequeathe this his Son unto thee in the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, for the perpetuall food and refreshing of thy soul.

Especially shewed in the sacred Communion.

2. And that by the due consideration of this speciall benefit (*of sacred Communion*) thou maist become all fire and love; thou shalt thus order thy devout exercise:

Weighing first, who it is that comes thus unto thee.

Consider, in the *first* place, *Who* it is that conferres on thee this so large and liberall gift: Surely, it is thy Lord God himselfe; the divine and increated wisedom and goodnesse; whose worth and perfection infinitly exceeds the reach of all created capacity.

3. *Then*

3. *Then*, looke upon the gift it self which is the true and onely Sonne of God, of equall height, nature and substance with the heavenly Father and holy Ghost. Now if a small gift proceeding from a King, hath its high value in respect of the giver; how highly is this gift to be valued by us, which is God, and given by God himselfe, as a token of his true love, and a perpetuall memoriall of his tender affection towards us? 2. What he gives thee.

4. *Again*, reflect upon the eternity of this love, by which it was decreed by his most divine, most hidden, and most holy wisdome, that he would thus give thee himselfe for thy food and refection: and hence begin with joy and jubily of heart to sing and say within thy selfe: *O infinite goodnesse of my God! and is it even so, that thou lovedst me in thy endlesse eternity! didst thou, ô my Lord and my God, so much value me, thy poor and unworthy creature, that thou remembredst mee in thy blessed eternity, and hadst an ardent affection and desire to give me thy self for the food of my soul?* 3. The eternity of his love.

5. And finally, looke into the *purity* of this *love*, which so great a 4. The purity of his love.

Lord shewes unto so mean a worm: How different is it from all earthly affection? how free from the least mixture of profit, and selfe-interest? How farre is it above thy merits, and how purely is it a worke of his onely mercy and bounty?

6. Having thus seriously and sweetly, with affection and admiration, meditated of the divine goodnesse; Thy heart may breake forth into these raptures: *Whence is it, O my Lord, that thou so lovest me an abject creature? Why, O King of glory, wilt thou so nearly joyne me to thy selfe, who am but a little dust and ashes? I well conceive thy designe, O my deare Lord, this thy excessive love towards me: It is to win me reciprocally to thy love; O the purity of divine love! Thou lovest me, ô my God, and givest thy whole selfe unto me, for no other end but that I may in gratitude give thee my love, life, and all, entirely: and this for no need thou hast of me, but meerly for thy mercies sake, and for my advancement and profit; that by this sweet, nye and happy union of love, my earthly heart may be raised up to become one with thy divine heart, ô my Lord and my God.* Ex-

Hence break forth into admiration.

Explication.

HEre all raviſht with joy to ſee thy ſelfe ſo highly prized, and beloved of thy Lord God; withdraw into the ſecreteſt part of thine owne heart, and there acknowledging that all this powerfull love, is to intice thy poore and inconſiderate ſelfe unto his divine Majeſty: make ſo abſolute an oblation of thy ſelfe unto him; that thy *memory* may ſcarcely thinke of any thing but thy God; thy affection may abhor all content which comes any way without him; and thy *Underſtanding* may admit of no other object for its continuall entertainment, than him, who is the onely ſatiety and ſatisfaction of all thy inward faculties and outward ſenſes.

And raviſhment to ſee thy ſelf ſo highly prized.

And make an intire oblation of thy ſelf to him.

And ſince there is *no action*, amongſt all them which concern our *Religion* and loyalty to God, which can compare with this, (of receiving him worthily in the moſt holy Sacrament,) either in appeaſing his anger, or uniting us to his love: Force thy ſelfe to the utmoſt of thy

And this being the chief act of Religion,

Strive to perform it moſt perfectly.

power to prepare, purifie, and open thy heart unto him, and to ſhut it againſt all things created.

Text. 7. Then offer and dedicate thy ſelf humbly and wholly, with heart and affection, to the divine pleaſure; and retaine an ever ready and inflamed deſire to pleaſe God, and follow his bleſſed will. And when this holy deſire and affection ſhall be throughly enkindled in thy ſoul; thou wilt ſeeme to move thy Lord God alſo to be ſo much enamoured with thee, that he deſires thou ſhouldeſt freely open thy heart to him, that he may the next morning enter in unto thee, feaſt with thee, and take his full delight in thee: Then doe thou alſo declare thy mutuall deſire to receive him, with theſe kind of Jaculatory prayers. *O heavenly and divine manna, when will that wiſhed houre come, that I ſhall to thine owne content, receive thee into my ſoul? Ah; When ſhall I be ſurely united unto thee, by ſincere affection? When ſhall I, (O onely life of my ſoul!) relinquiſh all ſelf-will, and vanquiſh all my paſſions and imperfections?*

Dedicating thy ſelf wholly to him.

And freely open thy heart to him.

8. In

8. In these and the like devotions thou maist spend the evening and morning, to excite, cherish, and encrease thy desire to receive thy deare Saviour, that so thou maist perfectly please him, and be most happily united unto him. And in thy pious practices of these things, take this Caveat: Be sure to keep each power and faculty of thy soule, pure and free from all *curiosity* of worldly things, and from all idle and vaine thoughts: Take also the like care of thy outward senses, lest thy heart steale out by them, and so thou lose all thy devotion.

But take heed of vanity and curiosity.

Explication.

THe time of the *sacred Communion* drawing nigh; think thou art to receive the Lord who created this great Universe, and thee to his owne likenesse; the Sonne of God, who died for thee naked on the Crosse; that increased goodnesse, which hath so often freed thee from danger, death, and damnation, which thy sinnes deserved.

At the time near the Communion.

1. Think what thou art going to doe.

Thanke him with most profound humility;

Thanks.

Adore, Implore.

humility; and adore him, (uniting all thy ſpirits and forces of body and ſoule togeather,) as true God, and true man. Beg alſo his pardon for thy faults, and that the ſame love which moves him to grant thee this great gift, may alſo induce him to purge thy ſoule from the ſtaines of all ſinne and uncleanneſſe, thereby diſpoſing it to a more pure and perfect union with his divine Majeſty.

When Domine non ſum dignus, is ſayd.

When the Prieſt pronounceth thoſe ſacred words: *Domine non ſum dignus*; *O Lord, I am not worthy*; accompany him with theſe following, and ſpeak to thy Lord and love from the bottome of thy heart. *I am not worthy to receiue thee, ô my great Lord, before whoſe Majeſty the Angels of heauen, tremblingly confeſſe their owne nothing. I am not worthy ô my Lord, that thou ſhouldeſt enter into my heart, who am one of the meaneſt, weakeſt, and ungratefulleſt creatures upon earth. I am not worthy, ô my Lord, that thou ſhouldeſt lodge with me, becauſe I loue thee not, and I remember thee not, though theſe are prime reaſons of thy inſtituting and remaining in this moſt bleſſed Sacrament.*

Thus

Thus humble, confound, and abisme thy selfe, at the serious consideration of thy sinnes, malice, and misery: but then raising up thy heart with hope by the following words; [*Sed tantum dic verbo, & sanabitur anima mea.*] *Doe thou onely speak the word, ô my Lord, and my soule will be saved: Enter, ô my love, into this unworthy harbour, and make use of thine infinite power and goodnesse in pardoning my sinnes, supplying my defects, and protecting me from my enemies.*

Humble and Confound thy selfe.

But still raising up thy heart with hope.

9. And after thou hast received this divine Sacrament, betake thee presently to the innermost closet of thy heart, and there enter into communication with thy holy guest, using these or the like loving and respectfull expressions: *What hath moved thee, O great King of Kings, to enter in to me, who am nothing but a miserable, despicable, vild, blind, and naked creature? And* he will answer thee: *Love; for thou art my dove, my friend, my sister, my spouse and my dearely beloved.* Then thou maist reply; *O increated love, ô sweetest dilection, ô friendly and faithfull charity,*

Text. Having communicated entertaine thy guest with amorous expressions.

charity, What wouldeſt thou have me doe? what demandeſt thou? what deſireſt thou? I ask nothing (ſaith he) but love: I would have nothing burne in the harth of thy heart, but the fire of my love, that it may devour all forraine love within thee, and deſtroy all ſelf-wil and ſeeking. This, this is my deſire; becauſe I would be truly thine, and would have thee likewiſe be totally mine: Which can never be compaſſed, untill thou freely deliver eſt up thy ſelfe to my will and pleaſure: For without this entire reſignation, thy fancy will be alwaies faſtned to the loving and liking of thy ſelfe, and thine owne actions, be they never ſo meane: I deſire therefore that thou ſhouldeſt hate thy ſelfe, that thou maiſt have the love of me: I demand thy heart for my habitation, that I may joyne and unite it unto mine, for to this end was my heart opened to thee upon the altar of my Croſſe. My Will is, I ſay, (ô my dearly beloved ſpouſe) that thou deſire nothing, think nothing, underſtand nothing, ſee nothing, feel nothing, but my ſelfe onely: that ſo I onely may be in thee, and thou totally turned into me, and that thou maiſt poſſeſſe in me perfect

fect quiet, and I in thee pleaſant content.

10. Laſtly, thou ſhalt *offer* the holy Sonne to his heavenly Father, for thy ſelfe, for the whole world, and for the ſoules departed; in memory and union of that divine oblation which he offered upon the holy Croſſe: preſenting in like manner all the unbloody ſacrifices to the divine Majeſty, which are that day offered up in his univerſall Church.

And Laſtly, offer up the divine Sonne to his heavenly Father.

Chap. XXXI.

Of Spirituall Communion.

ALthough (*my beloved*) thou canſt receive thy ſweeet Saviour *ſacramentally* onely *once* a day; yet thou maiſt receive him *ſpiritually*, *every houre* and moment: For nothing can hinder thee from this, but onely thine owne fault and negligence. And this ſpirituall Communion may ſometimes prove more profitable to thy ſoule, and pleaſing to thy Saviour, than the ſacramentall, eſpecially if there be a defect in

1. Thou maiſt thus often Communicate.

in thy due and diligent preparation.

By frequent desires.

2. For as often as thou desirest to receive thy loving Lord God thus *spiritually* into thy soule, thou shalt find him ever ready to feast thee with his owne sacred hands; and thou mayest thus easily dispose thy selfe unto it: Turning thy selfe to thy Saviour to this end, reflect upon thine owne frailty and frequent failings, and conceive an inward sorrow and detestation of thy defects; then make thy supplication with a loving affection, that he will not disdaine to enter thy poor cottage, and feast thee with his owne true body and blood.

And it is an excellent exercise against passions.

3. So also, when thou art moved with a pious zeal against any perverse *Passion*, and desirest efficaciously to mortify it, or to plant some vertue in thy soule; make use of this spirituall communion, by converting thy thoughts towards thy Lord God, and invoking his aid with ardent prayers, beseech him to enter and possesse the secret part of thy soule: Or, calling to mind thy last sacramentall communion, speak to him with

with an inflamed desire: *When (ô my good God) shall I againe welcome thee into the closet of my heart? Come now, (O my Saviour) and comfort me spiritually, with the like strength and vertue.*

Explication.

How to make great use of this exercise for thy spirituall profit.

IF thou wilt practice this pious exercise of *Spirituall Communion*, with more reverence and profit; frame thy intention over-night to apply all the mortifications of thy vicious passions, all the acts of vertue, and whatsoever good thou shalt any way performe, for the obtaining of this happy effect, and that thou maist worthily open the gate of thy heart, to give due entertainement to so divine a guest. And in the morning settle thy thoughts upon the serious consideration of the great happinesse of that sweet soule which worthily receives this most holy Sacrament, whereby sins breaches are repaired, lost vertues are restored, languishing forces are recruted, and each good returnes to its first beauty, by the communication of the fruits of Christs

Christs merits and passion. Then force and excite thy heart to an ardent desire of these comforts by thy Lords comming; and turning towards him, say: *O my Lord, and my love, I am not worthy to receive thee sacramentally; but doe thou, ô increated goodnesse and unlimited power, pardon all my imperfections, and make me worthy to receive thee spiritually, to the honour of thy holy name, and the true comfort of my poor soule.*

Chap. XXXII.
Of Thanks-giving.

All goodnesse is from God.

ALL our good actions are of God, and from God; and therefore a thankfull *gratitude* is due to him for all our well performed exercises, for each victory obtained against our enemies, and for all and singular his blessings and benefits.

To whom therefore all gratitude must be shewed.

2. And that thou maist not be defective in this point of duty: Remember, that the chiefe motive why our omnipotent creatour conferres his mercies upon his creatures, is that they should *correspond* to him in pious,

pious, perpetuall and worthy thanks-giving. And because our Lord God in bestowing his benefits, intends principally his owne *honour*; and secondly our *profit*: doe thou likewise in receiving them acknowledge in the first place, his power, wisdome, and goodnesse, which most gloriously shine in each one of them.

First, therefore acknowledge his goodnesse.

3. And in the *next place*, reflect upon thine own unworthinesse of so great favours, who art nothing else but ingratitude, misery, and baseness. And *Lastly*, submit thy selfe to obey his divine will and pleasure, and study to performe what thy Lord, in lieu of these benefits, expects from thee; which is, to love him chiefly, to serve him carefully, and to offer and dedicate thy selfe to him freely and totally; as I shall now teach thee.

And then thine own unworthynesse.

Chap. XXXIII.

Of the perfect oblation of thy selfe, to thy Lord God.

After thanks-giving for received favours, the soule presently breaks

breaks forth into that delicious affection of the Royall Prophet: *What shall I render to my Lord, for all the good things he hath given me?* That therefore thou maist doe something, seeming like satisfaction; by offering up to his Majesty, all that thou art, hast, and canst; and that entirely, absolutely, voluntarily, and by an efficacious act of thy inward man.

First, consider Gods greatnesse and glory.

2. Consider first with a serious attention the *greatnesse and glory* of thy Lord God; (for upon this depends the perfect oblation of thy selfe,) and thou wilt find that there is a *reverence and feare* due to this his greatnesse and glory: that there is *a love* due to his goodnesse; that there is a *hope & confidence* due to his mercy; and so of his other attributes and perfections: And thou shalt congratulate and rejoice with thy Lord God, that he is what he is; to wit, the best, greatest, most wise, most holy, most happy, most powerfull, most infinite, and that he hath all the perfections which he possesseth: Thus multiplying many such amorous acts of complacence in thy heart.

3. Then

2. Then, bow down the knees of soul and body with most profound reverence, before thy Lord and maker, adoring his divine Majesty, and acknowledging him to be the supream governour of all his creatures: And particularly, that whatsoever good thou hast by nature and by grace, is his proper gift: since he alone conferd it upon thee, and he alone conserves it in thee: for thus thou must needs confesse thy self to be his debtor, though thy offering be never so great; because thou canst present him with nothing, which is not already his owne, and first proceeding from his liberality and bounty; neither doth he lose his dominion thereof by conferring it upon thee.

2. Adore and acknowledg him, &c.

3. In the next place, passe on to the oblation it selfe; and deliver up all thine owne interest in whatsoever thou hast or canst, into the holy hands of thy heavenly creatour, with all possible cheerfulnesse and integrity: that is, offer up unto him all that he hath given thee, and so restore thy whole selfe to thy God in perpetuall bondage, to dispose of thee both in time & in eternity, as he best

3. Offer up all thy interest in any thing.

beſt pleaſeth: Neither ſhall it ſuffice thee to make this oblation generally, by preſenting unto him the root and beginning of all thy thoughts, words, and works; but thou ſhalt doe it peculiarly, by preſenting even thoſe alſo, which by reaſon of thy ſtate thou art obliged to exerciſe, to the honour & glory of his ſacred name.

And unite all to the merits of Chriſt.

5. *Laſtly*, thou ſhalt *unite this entire oblation* of thy ſelfe and all that belongs to thee, unto the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, the ſweet ſpouſe of thy ſoul; that from thence it may have that value and eſteeme, which from it ſelfe thou canſt not hope or expect: And thus thou ſhalt end thy exerciſe, by preſenting the eternall Father, with thy whole ſelfe and the holy merits of his onely Son joyned together, with all his actions and ſufferings, from the crib unto the Croſſe; for all theſe are thy treaſures, which he at his death, bequeathed by his laſt will and teſtament unto thee, whom he left entitled to all his merits: But remember that thou makeſt not this oblation for thy ſelfe alone, but alſo for the univerſall Church, and her members: for

Preſenting both together to the eternall Father.

for thus it will be far more acceptable to God being ſweetned with the incenſe of perfect charity.

6. In like manner, when thou wilt offer up thy *faſtings*, *prayers*, or other pious works to thy Lord God: conſider, that his holy Sonne thy ſweet Saviour hath already preſented them together with his owne, to his eternall Father; and ſo hath conjoyned and united them both together, doe thou therefore offer up the ſame in the ſame manner; by which thou ſhalt know that thy oblations proceed from a ſincere heart. And if thou practiſeſt this in time of adverſity, thou wilt eaſily maſter all miſery, anguiſh, pain, and perils whatſoever, & duly fulfil Gods holy pleaſure. So Likewiſe in offering thy works of piety.

7. If furthermore thou deſireſt to make an oblation of *Chriſts actions* for thine own offences, behave thy ſelfe in this ſort: *First* caſt thine eye upon thy ſinnes, and perceiving that thou canſt not hope to pacify Gods wrath, nor ſatisfie his divine Iuſtice by thine owne endeavours: addreſſe thy ſelfe to thy Saviours life, paſſion and death, and fix upon ſome one or other action or ſuffering of his; as upon How to offer up Chriſt's actions for our offences.

upon his fasting, or his praying, or the effusion of his precious bloud: *then* reflect, that he offered that his action or passion to his eternall Father for thy sins, and to reconcile him to thee; as if he said: *I do now, O my heavenly Father fully satisfie thy divine justice for the sins of this thy servant N. Oh; let it please thee to spare him, and to receive him into the number of thy elect.*

& Doe thou also make the same oblation of thy deare Saviour to the eternall Father; and humbly beg for thy selfe and others, that in vertue of this offering and for his owne glories sake, he will in his mercy pardon both thine and their offences.

And thou maist piously and profitably make use of this manner of spirituall exercise, in any action or passage of our Lord and Saviours life or passion.

EXPLICATION.

Another manner of perfect oblation.

Christ here on earth, offered not only himself,

TO the end thy *oblation* of thy selfe may be acceptable to the divine Majesty; Consider, that whilst our Saviour sojourned here upon earth,

earth, he perpetually offered up to his eternall father, not onely himself and all his merits, but also all us mortalls together with himself: Make therefore thy Oblation in vertue and union of his, yea make the self-same oblation of Jesus Christ, in which he also comprehended thee: and let this thy oblation be without the least touch of propriety or selfe-wil, neither regarding earthly goods, nor heavenly graces, but purely and precisely looking upon the divine pleasure and providence, to which thou art entirely to submit and sacrifice thy selfe, as a perpetuall holocaust, and forgetting all things created, say unto thy Lord God: *Behold, o my good God, o my great Creatour, a small lump of mire and earth mixed together, in the hands of thy eternall providence; do with me what best pleaseth thee, in my life, in my death, and after my death, in time, and in eternity.* And thou mayst give a probable guesse concerning thy own oblation, that it proceeds from a sincere and disinteressed heart, if thou canst perfectly practise it in time of adversity, bearing it with true

But also al us, to his Father.

Make thou the same oblation.

How to know the sincerity of thy oblation.

true patience, and being then ready to execute Gods holy will in all thy desolations and distresses. This is the right way, (o my dearly beloved.) to make a beneficiall truck and traffick of thy self for thy Saviour, who will give thee himselfe in exchange, if thou bequeathest and sacrificest thy selfe thus totally to his divine Majesty.

Chap. XXXIV.

How to petition for divine grace.

Text. First encourage thy selfe with confidence in his goodnesse.

HAving made this *perfect oblation* of this most precious treasure, (which is no lesse than Christ himselfe, with all his glorious merits,) to the Eternall Father: thou mayst appeare with *Confidence* before the throne of his mercy, to petition for the supply of thy necessities; And that thou mayst doe it with the more decency:

First, encourage thy selfe with confidence, remembring his benefits, bounty, and liberality towards thee: for nothing can more strengthen thy hope of obtaining new supplies, than

the

than the reflection upon Gods former favours in time of necessity: And know that this *confidence* gives the whole efficacy to thy petition; so that without it, never expect to obtain from God any thing which thou demandest.

Secondly, join humility with it.

2. *Secondly*, Take speciall care that this Confidence be coupled with *humility*; distrusting totally thine owne merits, and relying boldly upon Christs mercies: Not that I advise thee to become fearfull and pusilanimous, upon pretence of humillity; so as not to beg large benefits from Gods bounty: For though it behooves to know thine own baseneſſe, and to consider how litle thou deserveſt; yet thou must beware of distrusting the divine bounty, or undervaluing his liberality: No, be not dejected; for as thou deserveſt nothing, so thou hast greater occasion to demand much; since Gods gifts are not grounded upon thy deserts, but upon Christs merits, which are of infinite worth and dignity.

Thirdly, presse thy petition with fervent desires.

3. *Thirdly*, Endeavour to presse thy petition with frequent and *fervent desires*: that is, that thou ardently

wish to obtain what thou askest: for since thou petitionest a most pious father for a supply of thy necessities, who not onely bids thee ask great things, but is also angry if thou askest not; and hath past his promise to perform thy petition; why shouldst thou not have inflamed desires to obtain what thou demandest?

The want whereof, hinders the effect of our demands.

4. And indeed we most commonly faile in the effects of our demands, because we want this *fervour in our desires*, and make our petitions tepidly, rather because faith and reason dictate unto us that such things are needfull for us, than that we zelously covet to receive them: The true cause of which tepidity is, for that our affections being fastned to earthly things, we prize them in our wills, though we sleight them in our understandings; and consequently though we know in our judgement, that our minds are to be raised up to higher objects, yet we doe not seriously seek to be separated from them; whereas if we verily and vigorously, humbly and heartily desired it, our prayers would soon return us a happy effect.

5. *Lastly*

5. *Lastly*, provide that thy petition want not; First, *Affection of charity* to thy neighbours; for it should not suffice thee to pray fervently for thy self, but to extend thy piety in petitioning the divine grace for all others. Fourthly, Let not thy petition want Charity.

Secondly, *Perseverance*; For our loving Lord, useth sometimes to prolong and to put off the fulfilling of our petition, for our greater profit, and the better encrease and enkindling of our holy desires, as may be exemplified in the Cananean woman, and Evangelicall widdow. Perseverance.

Thirdly, *Resignation* of thy will; For thou art to represent thy desires to thy deare Lord, as if thou rather expectedst the fulfilling of his divine pleasure, than of thy petition: So Christ prayed in the garden, not to have his owne will, but his heavenly Fathers accomplished. Resignation.

CHAP. XXXV.

Some short observations concerning meditation.

FIrst, Before thou betakest thy self to thy nights rest; *read* attentively 1. Read overnight

the matter of thy meditation.

tively and considerately that mystery of thy Saviours life, or that argument which thou meanest to meditate upon the morning following; and contracting it into two or three points or heads, commit it to thy memory.

2. Reflect of the same in the morning.

2. When thou awakest from sleep, shut out all other thoughts from thy heart, and let thy employment be to *reflect* upon, and repeat the points, prepared over night for this mornings exercise: and think that thou art presently to talk with thy Lord God.

3. Weigh his majesty with whom thou conferre.

3. Wherefore making (as it were) a stand, for a short space, before thou art in the place of prayer; imagin that thy great Creatour, whom the Angels adore, is present in the Oratory, expecting thee to enter discourse with him, and beholding thy behaviour in thy prayer. Let this truth make a deep impression in thy mind; and thereupon yield him most profound reverence with body and heart, as craving permission to confer with his majesty.

4. Begin with obla-

4. Then with bended knees, begin thy prayer, first, *offering* up to thy Lord God

God all the cogitations, words, and actions of thy whole life; particularly presenting unto him this present exercise now intended, to his honour and glory; and humbly implore his gracious assistance, that thou mayst perform this thy practice with such attention, devotion, and reverence, as befits one that speakes with his Lord and Saviour. tion, and petition.

5. Incontinently after this, imagin thy selfe present to the *mystery* thou intendest to meditate on, and in the very place where it befell; for this will fix thy fancy from wandring: As, If thy theame be *of Christs Incarnation*; think thou seest the glorious Arch-angel entring the secret chamber of the sacred Virgin, and there listen to their mutuall discourses. So, If thy subject be of thy *Saviours flagellation*; suppose a pillar before thee with thy deare Lord fastned thereunto, and eye those inhumane executioners, how cruelly they whip and beat him: And thus thou art to vary thy fancy, and conform it to the manner of the mystery. Then apply thy senses to the mystery.

6. And when the *mysterie* is thus

And beg what thou intendeſt to obtain.

preſent to thy mind, make thy petition, and beg that which thou propoſedſt to obtain by this exerciſe: As, If thy meditation be concerning *Chriſts Incarnation*, let thy prayer be for ſpirituall light, that thou mayſt clearly penetrate and perceive that ineffable love which moved him to be made man for thy ſake: If it be *of his Paſſion*, ask the grace of compaſſion and condoling with thy dear Saviour's ſufferings; and ſo let thy petition be for ſuch pious affections, as are uſher'd in by the argument of thy prayer.

After this begin with the firſt point.

7. this done, begin with thy *firſt point*; and if that alone furniſh thee with fewell ſufficient to inflame thy affection, perſevere therein for the whole ſpace aſſigned to thy prayer; but if otherwiſe, then paſſe on to the *ſecond*. And briefly, take this for a *maxim* in all meditations; that whenſoever thou feeleſt thy affection enkindled; ſtay there, and diſgeſt well that conſideration, till thou haſt therein fully ſatisfied thy devotion.

And beware of

8. And ſuffer not thy underſtanding to roam after *high* and delicate *myſteries*;

fancying high mysteries,

steries; but make use of it a discourse so farre onely, as many helps to heat thy will with pious affections, and solid resolutions. Wherefore from each consideration extract some affection, and from every affection draw some determinate and particular resolution, to do this very day, this or that thing for thy Lords honour; to reform this or that fault or imperfection, and to mortify thy sensuality in this or that occasion. And this is the true fruit and profit of prayer.

Or leaving off before the time allotted for prayer, be expired.

9. Bee resolute also in staying out the full time allotted for thy prayer; and stirre not from it through any dryness in devotion, or any trouble of distractions; for such a *prayer* is for the most part more profitable to a soul using diligent resistance, and patient expectance of Gods grace, than when it sensibly partakes of the sweets and abundance of devotion.

In the end reflect how thou hast behaved thy self,

10. Thy exercise being ended, insist a while in the *examination* of thy self; and reflect how thou hast behaved thy self in thy prayer: If thou findest all well; give thy good God all

all the thanks; if thou haſt been negligent, reſolve upon amendment; and take notice of the cauſe of this ill ſucceſſe, that thou fail not for the future.

And order well the matter of thy meditation.

11. Let the matter or myſteries thou meaneſt to meditate upon, *be well ordered*; as, if thou propoſeſt to thy ſelf, thy Saviours life and paſſion, make thy entrance at his Incarnation, and duly proceed in the reſt of the enſuing myſteries; and leap not inconſtantly from one to another.

Chap. XXXVI.

An Exerciſe before the Sacred Communion.

1. The place.

1. THe *conformation* of the place, for the ſetling of thy mind; may be to imagin thy Saviour Chriſt, encompaſſed with his Angels and Saints, who all adore his divine Majeſty with all poſſible reverenc.

2. Beg of thy Saviour to fit up thy poor houſe.

2. Make thou alſo thy humble addreſſe unto him, and ſince hee vouchſafeth to divert into the harbour of thy poor heart, *entreat* him to ſend before him ſuch ornaments,

as

as are necessary for his worthy entertainment; because thy poverty is uncapable to provide, what is suitable to so great a majesty.

3. Then reflect *who it is* that intends to lodge with thee; It is surely hee, whom the Angel named Jesus, the Saviour of man-kind; Hee, who onely can cure thy wounds: Hee, who so dearly loves thee, and takes such care of thy salvation, that he came purposely and personally to procure it; interposing his authority, hazarding his honour, and losing his life for thee upon an ignominious Crosse: And be sure to insist upon this pious consideration, as being very proper to prepare thy soul for the receiving of this most holy Sacrament; according to our Saviours precept, *As often as you shall doe these things you shall do them in remembrance of me.* 3. Think what guest is to lodge in it.

4. Consider *to what end* thy dear Lord comes unto thee; Surely, to conclude a union betweene himselfe and thy soule, whence results a certaine divine life, which thou henceforth enjoyest by this sweet union with thy Saviour. For the food we 4. Why he comes to thee.

take, begets humours of the ſame quality which it ſelfe is of: and conſequently no mervaile if this heavenly food, and divine nouriſhment do in ſome ſort deify the ſoul. *He that eats me, ſhal live for me*, ſaith our *Lord*.

5. To whom he comes.

5. Let thy next conſideration be, *to whom* he comes; To a litle worm of the earth, to a veſſell full of filth and rottenneſſe: and perhaps, (which is farre worſe) even to his enemy, to the contemner of his commands, to the wilfull tranſgreſſour of his lawes, to a baſe run-away, who hath forſaken the colours of his Lord God, and taken part with the Devill.

6. Make thy petition.

6. Make therefore thy humble ſupplication to thy ſweet Saviour, that ſince he vouchſafeth freely to come unto thee for his owne mercies ſake, and for no merits of thine; he will alſo be pleaſed to prevent thee with his grace, and adorne thee with the gifts of his holy Spirit, that thou maiſt become a worthy receptacle for his ſacred body: as he formerly by the like prevention, prepared for himſelfe a happy and holy habitation in the virginall entralls of his moſt bleſſed Mother.

Chap. XXXVII.

How we may devoutly offer up the sacrifice of the Masse.

1.

WHen thou feelest thy heart inflamed by this foregoing or the like exercise; free thy fancy of all *sensible objects*, and shutting the windows of thy senses, soare up to thy Lord God, and fix there the eye of thy soule upon him onely, purely, freely, and quietly, excluding all tumults of outward thoughts; and implore the assistance of the holy Ghost, by reciting the hymn of the holy Church, *Veni creator spiritus*, &c.

1. Free thy fancy from all outward objects.

2. Then comming to put on the sacred *vestments*, mark with attention those mysteries which they mean and signify: and from that very instant of time, take upon thee *Christs person*, whom thou representest in this holy action; that so thou maist be moved, to conforme each outward and inward deed, to him whom thou now personatest.

2. In vesting thy selfe, mark the mysteries.

3. And as for the *outward composure* of the body; see that thy going forth

3. Let thy outward deportment be decent.

forth of the vestry, be with all decency and gravity; let thy countenance be cherfull, thine eyes humbly cast downe, and not curious to prie after any passages done in the Church: Let thy voice be low and sober, reading those sacred words neither precipitantly, nor over-pausingly, but beseemingly between both those extremes: Let the holy ceremonies be piously and punctually observed: and let all be attentively performed; taking more care in the *Canon*, and most of all when thou commest to the words of *consecration*.

4. And thy inward composition correspondent.

4. Let thy *inward composition* also correspond with thy outward carriage; and therefore comming to the foot of the Atar, looke upon Christ thy Lord and thy love, sitting in his throne of glorious majesty, attended by his Angels and blessed Saints: and think he is presently comming down from his throne to the altar, to enrich thy poore soule with the treasures of his divinity: And considering so high a Majesty, confesse thine own misery, meanesse, and nothing: and so truly humbling thy selfe both inwardly,

inwardly and outwardly, begin the action of the sacrifice: And keep this *presence* of thy Saviour sitting in his throne and beholding thy devotion, untill thou commest to the consecration; which done, thou hast him then before thee upon the altar, thou touchest him with thy hands, and embracest him in thy heart there present in the Sacrament.

5. In thy first *memento*: Contemplate thy Lord Jesus crucified, reposing in thy heart, and depose all thy necessities and wants in his sacred and sugred wounds. And first offer up thy whole Masse to his *holy head*, intending it to the eternall honour of the most blessed Trinity, and for the increase of the accidentall glory of his deare Mother, thy Angel guardian, and thy particular protectours and patrons in heaven; all which thou shalt joyne together in the wounds of thy Lords venerable head; and beseech them, that as thou in this vale of misery, strivest to augment their glory; so they in their happy and heavenly mansions, will be pleased to remember thee, and joyne with thee in the oblation of this

5. In thy first memento.

To Christs holy head.

this divine sacrifice to thine and their Creatour.

To his right hand. 6. Comming then to the *wound of his right hand*, pray for the state ecclesiasticall; that is, for the Pope, Cardinalls, Bishops, and pastours of the Church; for all Religious persons and their Prelats: and for them all, offer up this present sacrifice.

To his left hand. 7. At the *wound of his left hand*, pray for the Laity; for Kings, Princes, Magistrates, and the rest of their people; and in particular for thy parents, friends, familiars, and all who desired to be made partakers in thy devotions.

To his sacred heart. 8. At his *most sweet heart*, offer up thy whole selfe onely, humbly representing unto him thy life past, and begging his pardon: thy present being, and desiring his direction: thy spirituall necessities and corporall needs; thy health, thy temptations, thy desires, thy designes; Consecrate all the future thoughts, words and works of thy whole life to his eternall honour: Finally, resigne thy whole selfe reverently and confidently to his divine providence;

and

and so rest secure in his care, since thou hast delivered all thy affaires into his custody, who will better improve all things for thy profit, than thou canst either ask or expect.

9. At the *wound of his right foot*, offer up the sacrifice for all them who are in Gods grace, and continue in his charity, that he will be pleased to preserve them still in his favour and friendship. To his right foot.

10. At the *wound of his left foot*, offer it up for all sinners, that God will vouchsafe to convert and enlighten them: for all poore, weak, and any-way-afflicted wights, that he will please to comfort and deliver them; and lastly for all thou either oughtest, or art bound to pray. And so conclude thy whole oblation with Saint *Augustines* words: *I recommend unto thy Majesty, whomsoever thou (ô my Lord) wilt, and knowest; and wouldest have me remember:* And finally, offer up thy Saviour Jesus, thus loaded (as I may say) with all thy petitions and necessities, to his eternall Father in this present sacrifice; saying those words of the Psalmist: *Behold, ô God our protector,* Ps. 83. 10. To his left foot. *Commendo eos, quos tu vis & scis, & velle me nosti.*

and

and look upon the face of thy Christ; And so proceed on in the sacred Action.

6. In thy second memento.

11. In thy second *memento*; Thou hast Christ present in the holy Sacrament, now glorious and risen from death; unite therefore thy affection unto him, and strive to creep into his open side, and there hide thy self safely and securely from all assaults of thine enemies: There also determine resolutely to doe his holy will for the future in all occurrences whatsoever; and put on that pious affection of the Royall Prophet: *What is to me in heaven? and besides thee, ô my Lord and love, What would I upon the earth?* Lastly, offer up the Sacrifice for the soules of the faithfull departed; and compleat what remains of the sacred Masse.

Psal. 72. 25.

Chap. XXXVIII.

An Exercise after the holy Communion.

1. Representation of the place.

REpresent to thy selfe (as formerly) thy Blessed Saviour, encompassed with the glorious troops

troops of Angels and heavenly spirits, adoring and praising his divine Majesty.

2. Then *implore* his grace; that since he beyond all desert of thine, hath vouchsafed to enter thy poor cottage, he will be likewise pleased to furnish it with all such ornaments of holy vertues as may best like himselfe; and to illustrate thy soul with the beams of his celestiall light, as he did that of holy *Simeon*; that with him, receiving thy Lord into thy loving embraces, thou mayst sweetly intone thy *Nunc dimittis*, &c. 2. Implo-ration of his grace.

3. In the next place, consider that he *whom thou hast now within thee*, is thy same Lord God, of whom before Communion thou conceivedst such high things: And render him humble thanks, for this immense benefit, of communicating and uniting himselfe unto thee; intreating him that it may not be a sleight (and as it were) a passing visit, but a permanent abode with thee. 3. Consider whom thou hast within thee.

4. After this, look upon thine *own unworthinesse* to receive such a guest; how homely is thy habitation? how beggarly, yea how beastly is 4. Mark thine own unworthy-nesse.

is thy heart? how full of the noyse of passions and perplexities? and draw from hence acts of sorrow for thy sins, of shame for thy negligence, and of confusion for the uncleanesse of thy soul.

5. Make thy Petition.

5. And lastly, *ask* with a most fervent desire, that he who is the King of glory and goodnesse, and the source of all sanctity and purity, will garnish thy soul with his vertues, and wash away all thy filthyness with the water of his celestiall grace; and so inseparably unite and joyn thee to himselfe, that nothing created may evermore make a breach between thee and him; but that he will strongly lock up the closet-doore of thy heart, and mark it for his own habitation with the signet of his sacred love; that so he alone may there peaceably and perpetually take up his rest, without the least disturbance of any forrain guest.

CHAP. XXXIX.

A dayly Examination.

1. FOr the keeping clean of thy *Conscience*, it will be necessary for thee to go down daily into it, and sweep each darkest corner thereof with the besom of diligent examination, that all uncleanesse may be speedily cast forth of dores.

2. Wherefore, thou art to do *three* things every Morning: *First*, Give God thanks for all his benefits bestowed upon thee in the night past, and particularly for thy delivery from sodaine death, and from the deceits of the Devil. 2. *Then*, make a cordiall oblation of all things thou shalt thinke, speake, or do in the day following: and intreat the Blessed Virgin, that shee will bee pleased to present with her purest Hands this Oblation of thy self and thy actions, together with thee, to her onely Son. 3. *And lastly* conceiving a confidence of the Divine assistance, make a firm purpose by his grace not to offend him that Day in the least veniall sinne.

Every Morning thou art to do three things.

3. And

At night thou art to examine thy selfe.

3. And at night, a litle before thou betakest thy selfe to thy rest, *examine thy selfe* how stoutly thou hast stood to this good purpose. But before thou descendest to particulars, thinke of thy Lords Presence, to whom thou art now ready to give in a reckoning of that days transactions: and indeavour to feele a certaine shame and confusion in thy self, like an ill servant before his most indulgent master; or like a perfidious Souldier before his pious Soveraign, who rays'd him from the dunghill to the highest degree of honour: for how much more reason hast thou to be ashamed in the sight of thy God, whom thou hast served so negligently, and offended so impudently?

Begin with a generall acknowledgement of Gods favours.

4. Begin therefore with *a generall acknowledgement* of thy Lords love and favours, conferred upon thee from the first instant of thy being, to that present houre: rendring him particular thanks for the benefits that day received from his Bounty: And invite all the Angels and Saints, and chiefly the sacred Virgin, to help thee make a worthy thanks-giving, for thy Creation, Conservation, Redemption,

demption, Vocation, Remission of thy enormous crimes; and expectation of thee so long to penance, &c.

5. Secondly, *demand light and grace* to see thy defects and negligences, which thou hast that day committed, and to seeke a true sorrow and contrition for the same: For they are so secret, that without this light thou canst not discerne them, and so enormous, that without this ayd thou canst not truly judge of them. Then beg light and grace.

6. Thirdly, *run over each houre* of the day, and discusse with diligence what were thy Thoughts, Words, Actions or Omissions, in every of them, that thou mayst punctually perceive wherein thou hast particularly transgressed. Next, descend to particulars,

7. Fourthly, indeavour to excite *a true sorrow* for thy sinnes, (which is the main drift of this examen,) and let this grief touch thy heart, because thou hast offended so good a God, rather than for any other inconvenience, which thereby thou incurrest: Let it proceed (I say) not from any feare of punishment which thou hast deserved; but from a true reverence, and high esteeme, which is due from thee And indeavour to excite a true sorrow for thy sins.

thee to the Divine Majesty of thy Lord God, whom thou desirest to love and respect above all things, and resolvest to practise it for the time to come.

And lastly implore his pardon for the past, and protection for the future.

8. Fifthly therefore, and lastly, *beg his pardon* for thy past negligence, and his assistance for thy future amendment: promising particularly, and resolving effectually, to shun, for his love, this or that occasion of sinne; and to lay hold of this or that opportunity, for the correction and bettering of thy selfe.

9. And if thou happily findest by this serious discussion of thy selfe, that thy transgressions are not so grievous as to excite thee to this sorrow and shame; refer all this to the *Divine mercy*, and not to thy own diligence or vertue: And reflect upon thy *former faults*, and the grievous failings of other worldlings; and conclude that thou hadst surely fall'n more foulely, had not his Heavenly Grace upheld and prevented thee.

Ex-

Explication.

Another method of Examination.

Question thy selfe concerning, *three things. First*, Wherein thou hast that day fallen and offended. *Secondly*, What occasion'd it, *Thirdly* How diligent thou hast been in the practice of vertue.

Concerning thy *fallings*, read and follow the 15 foregoing Chapter.

Concerning the *occasions*, resolve to cut them off for the future.

And for thy *practice of vertue*; strengthen thy will with these three Cordials; distrust in thy selfe, trust in God, & Prayer. Suspect thy past victories, and rely not upon thy former good works; but rather forget them, lest thou fall into selfe-complacency; looke alwayes forwards upon what thou yet want'st, & how much rests to bee done: And acknowledging Gods Grace to be the source of all goodnesse, thank him for all his benefits and blessings; for the inspirations he hath sent thee; and the good desires of vertue he hath given thee; for his deli-

deliverance from dangers, and defence against thine enemies.

CHAP. XL.

Being a Conclusion of the Whole Worke.

This short booke well practised is sufficient.

1. MUch *more* might be said of these important matters; but let this which is here delivered, according to my poore Talent, suffice for the *present*: which surely if thou endeavoureſt to keepe in thy memory, and accompliſh in thy actions, thou haſt ſufficiently learned and laboured.

2. But in reſpect of thy weake capacity, and my propoſed brevity; it will be neceſſary that thou uſe a *ſtudious diligence* in often revolving and meditating upon theſe foregoing Precepts: For by frequent conſideration, and continuall exerciſe, thou wilt certainly increaſe thy inward ſtrength, whereby to conquer all thine enemies.

Ex-

Explication.

ABove all things beg inceſſantly of the Divine Goodneſſe, the gift of perſeverance, in thy unwearied endeavours againſt thy paſſions and imperfections; it being the chiefe weapon in this ſpirituall warfare, againſt thy never-dying enemies; which like ill weeds are ever budding and breaking forth, ſo long as the Earth hath any life in it to nouriſh them.

3. Reſolve therefore to betake thy ſelfe to theſe propoſed Armes of defence; and to fight ſtoutly, manfully and conſtantly; becauſe no man can avoid this combat, without endangering the loſſe of the conqueſt. Nor can there be any *hope of Peace* with ſuch enemies; which endommage them moſt, who moſt deſire to enter league and friendſhip with them. Text. If thou reſolveſt to fight manfully.

4. Neither be thou terrified at their ſeeming *power and cruelty*; ſince all their force and fury, is in the more powerfull hands of that Supreme And not to be terrified at thy enemies power.

Captaine, for whose honour thou art ingaged in the battail; wherein none can be vanquished, but they that will themselves. And if thy Lord for whom thou wagest this war, doth seem sometimes to withdraw his Assistance, and delay thy conquest over thine enemies for a time, yet be not thou faint-hearted, but fight on courageously; being most certain and secure, that his Goodnesse, Power, and Providence, directs all events, (and more especially all adversities) to the best profit of his souldiers.

Though the victory seems to come slowly on.

5. These thoughts will beget in thee *a generous spirit*, and a constant heart to resist and fight with courage; and therefore though the victory comes slowly on, beleeve firmly that this deferring is *either* to free thy soule from secret pride, and conserve thee in true humility: *Or else* to perfect thee in vertue, and to teach thee to become a tryed Souldier, by these long continued conflicts; *Or surely*, for some other good of thine, which thy Lord then conceales from thee, for thy greater merit and improvement.

6. Go

6. Go on therefore, (*O my dearly beloved*) and enter these lists with a cheerfull and heroick minde, lest thou seem ungratefull to thy loving Lord God, who so much tendred thy good that he suffered death for thy sake: And attend carefully to every *Counsell and Command* of thy Captaine Christ Jesus, that thou mayst totally rout and ruine all thine enemies: For if thou permittest but one only to live and lurk in thy Soul, it will be as a moat in thy eye, and as a Launce in thy bowels, and prove a perpetuall impediment in the progresse of so glorious a Victory.

APOC. 2.7.
To him that overcommeth, I will give the hidden Manna.

I. KINGS, 15.18.
Thou shalt fighe against them, untill their utter destruction.

The generall Table, containing the ſeverall Chapters of this Treatiſe, as they ſtand divided into numbers: And being a brief compendium of the whole worke.

The Spirituall Conflict. Or, The Arraignment of the Spirit of Self-love, and Senſuality, at the bar of Truth and Reaſon.

Chap. I.

Wherein Chriſtian perfection conſiſts. The importance of this knowledge is very great. Numb. 1. *Some place perfection in auſterity.* 2. *Others in reciting many prayers.* 3. *Others in exact obſervance.* 4. *All which*

which are good meanes, but not directly tending to perfection. 5. *And they that reſt in theſe lower exerciſes, are in great danger.* 6. *As may appeare by the reſt of their actions.* 7. *And eſpecially by their want of reſignation in time of affliction.* 8. *True perfection therefore conſiſts in the knowledge of God, and our ſelves, In the love of God, and hatred of our ſelves, In reſignation to God's will, and denying our owne.* 9. *All which Chriſt hath taught us by word and example.* 10. *And we muſt alſo do it, if we meane to purchaſe victory.* 11. *Nor is there any thing more glorious to our ſelves, or more gratefull to God.* 12. *But to obtaine it, we muſt provide foure neceſſary weapons.* 13.

Chap. II.

First, Diſtruſt of our ſelves, *which is gotten, by a deep ſenſe of our owne nothing.* 1. *By Pray-*

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er. 2. And by often reflecting upon our owne weaknesse. 3. And this self-knowledge is a lesson must be well learn'd. 4. And we must be carefull to rise speedily after our fall. 5. The great necessity of this distrust in our owne strength, is inforced by the corruption of our nature, and the frailty thereof: and by considering how much this acknowledgment pleaseth God, and presumption displeaseth him. 6.

Chap. III.

Secondly, Confidence in God, which is obtained. 1. By prayer. 2. By considering the divine power, wisdome, and goodnesse, by which he can, knowes how, and is willing to help us. 3. By meditating upon holy writ. 4. Another means is, by thinking on our owne frailty, and Gods omnipotency, at the beginning of each action: Whereby we shall not be foolishly dejected at our frequent

failings. 5. *A neceſſary Caveat, for all ſpirituall people.* 6. *By Gods aſſiſtance we can doe all things, But many are deceived in preſuming upon their owne ſtrength.* 7.

Chap: IV.

Thirdly, Continuall Exerciſe, 1. *Which conſiſts, in the right uſe of the Underſtanding.* 2. *Which is to be kept from Ignorance, by prayer, and by a diligent diſcuſſion of our own actions; judging things according to their true worth; And this will open our eyes to ſee the meanneſſe of all worldly vanities.* 3. *A neceſſary caution, to keep the will from fixing its love, untill the Underſtanding have firſt pondered the object.* 4. *And the ſame caution is neceſſary alſo in holy things.* 5. *The underſtanding is to be furthermore weaned from curioſity.* 6. *How highly this conduceth to perfection, and how cunningly*

ningly the Devill plots against it, by ſuggeſting pride to our Underſtanding. 7. Which is farre more dangerous, and more difficultly cured than Pride of the Will. 8.

Chap. V.

Of the Will: and the end, to which we are to direct all our actions. A will to doe well ſufficeth not, But our actions muſt alſo be performed onely to pleaſe God. 1. Which to attaine to, Apply thy Underſtanding to know Gods will. 3. And take heed of being deceived, becauſe nature is ſubject to ſeek her ſelfe. 4. This intention, of doing all for God, is to be always made in the entrance upon any work, And to be renewed in the proſecution of it. 6. Leſt ſelf-love creep in, and ſo change and corrupt it. 7. He that doth all things to pleaſe God, remains in perfect indifferency, and hath alwaies what he deſires, which

failings. 5. A necessary Caveat, for all spirituall people. 6. By Gods assistance we can doe all things, Germany are deceived in presuming upon their owne strength. 7.

Chap. IV.

Thirdly, Continuall Exercise. 1. Which consists, in the right use of the Understanding. 2. Which is to be kept from Ignorance, by prayer, and by a diligent discussion of our own actions; judging things according to their true worth; And this will open our eyes to see the meanesse of all worldly vanities. 3. A necessary Caveat, to keep the will from fixing its love, untill the understanding have first pondered the objects. 4. That the same caution is necessary also in holy things. 5. The understanding is to be furthermore weaned from curiosity. 6. How highly this conduceth to perfection, and how cunningly

mingly the Devill plots against it, by suggesting pride to our Understanding. 7. Which is farre more dangerous, and more difficultly cured than Pride of the Will. 8.

Chap. V.

Of the Will: and the end, to which we are to direct all our actions. A will to doe well sufficeth not, But our actions must also be performed onely to please God. 1. Which to attaine to, Apply thy Understanding to know Gods will. 3. And take heed of being deceived, because nature is subject to seek her selfe. 4. This intention, of doing all for God, is to be always made in the entrance upon any work, And to be renewed in the prosecution of it. 6. Lest self-love creep in, and so change and corrupt it. 7. He that doth all things to please God, remains in perfect indifferency, and hath alwaies what he desires, which

shews the high importance of this pure intention. 8. And it may be kept even in things aiming at our owne good; Finally it puts such a worth upon our actions, that the best of them without it is lost, and may be sinfull, and the smallest with it is most acceptable to God. 9. If this exercise seem hard at first, yet use will render it easie, and soone beget a habit in our soules. 10. Especially, if we consider how dearly our Lord hath loved us; as appears in our Creation, Redemption, Preservation, and his other benefits, which are so great that none but God himselfe can comprehend them. 11.

Chap. VI.

There are in man two wills: The Rationall, seated betweene Gods grace & our sense. 1. And the sensuall. 2. The truly vertuous persons yield promptly to Gods will, & vitious to their sensuality. But

they

they who of sinners are become converts, have the greatest conflict. 3. Who must therefore resolve to bear patiently the losse of their pleasures. There are divers sorts of unmortified soules; seeming good, but full of imperfection, ignorance and blindnesse. 4. A danger in the choyce of spirituall Exercises, discovered.

Chap. VII.

Of the fight against Sensuality, and of the inward way of the Will to acquire Vertues. When sensuality rebels. 1. Look strictly to thy reason, that it consent not: and recall that motion againe and againe, and as often conquer it. 2. Also produce acts of those vertues, which are contrary to these vices. 3. But beware of thy cunning enemy, who sometimes suppresseth these motions. 4. For then it is thy part to excite them, and fight afresh with them. 5. Till thou hast gotten a perfect hatred

of

of them. 6. And the way to plant vertues, is to practice Acts contrary to those defects; The reason whereof is, because as long as the root of vice remains alive in us, it will still bud forth, and choak up our plants of vertue. And therefore we must make many Acts (contrary to the vicious habit,) to implant the habit of vertue. 7. And though this be full of paine, yet it is also full of profit. 8. The like diligence must be also used against the least evill motion. 9. Yea and against lawfull affections, when they are not absolutely necessary. 10. And this is the way to become truly spirituall. 11. Because all vice springs from the yielding to sense, and all vertue by subduing and submitting our will to Gods. 12.

Chap. VIII.

What he must doe, who feels his Reason conquered by Sense. So long as thou consentest not to Sensuality,

Sensuality, fearfulness. 2. For victory consists not, in feeling no motion, but in not yielding. 2. But if thy enemy surpriseth thy Reason, then give back, to gaine time and strength. 3. And if then haste time, help thy selfe with consideration. 4. Whether thou hast deserved this affliction: If so, rest contented: If not, think upon thy former sinnes, not yet fully punished. 5. Yea, though they were, yet self-deniall and sufferance is the way to heaven. 6. And if there were another way, yet thy duty to God, binds thee to chuse this, 7. As being most gratefull and pleasing to his Majesty. 8.

Chap. IX.

That we must not shun the occasions of these Combats. The way to get true vertue, is not to avoid, but to seek the occasions of combat; As for example, To get Patience, shun not the company. 1.

Or

Or the imployment which is tedious to thee. 2. And the same rule is to be applied to troublesome thoughts. 3. Yet a young Scholler must be wary in waging this war, but never desert the Field; for then he will still be unprovided. This is good in all cases, except that of carnality. 4.

Chap. X.

Of the fight against Sudden Temptations and Passions. First, ponder them in thy understanding: 1. And forsee, what is like to befall thee. 2. But if some other crosse happens, not foreseen; fly to the thoughts of Gods Love and Providence. 3. Who sends or permits it, 4. and be constant, though almost conquered. 5. But the best remedy against sudden motions, is to cut off their causes. 6.

XI.

Of the fight against fleshly Concupiscence. In this warr, thou are to change thy weapons. 1. And

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therefore before the temptation assails thee, call it not, but avoid all occasions procuring it. This enemy assails us sometimes by stealth, and upon pretexts of lawfulnesse, &c. but Sensuality may mix it selfe with thy affection, and ruine thy Soule. 2. The occasions are commonly five: Conversation, Affects, Idlenesse, Disobedience, Vain complacency. 2. In the time of the temptation, marke the cause of it, whether externall, and fly from it. 3. Or internall, and prevent it by fit chastisements of the body, and by hearty Prayer. 4. Yet not as some Bookes prescribe, for feare of giving new occasions to impurity. 4. But by meditating on Christs Death and Passion. 5. Dispute not with carnall temptations, but discover them to thy Ghostly Father. 6. And make no actuall and particular reflexions upon these temptations. 7. After the temptation

tion is past, stand still upon thy guard. 8.

Chap. XII.

How to fight against slackneſſe and Negligence. Follow holy inſpirations ſpeedily. For this is of great conſequence to conquer Sloath, and having couragiouſly ſet upon thy worke, carefully proſecute the ſame. 1. The fruit whereof muſt be diſcovered, 2. And the pains diſguiſed, 3. Unleſſe there be a reall diſability. 4. But the beſt way to get a cuſtome of induring, is to expect Groſſes continually, and not to ſeeke how to avoid them. 5. How prejudiciall Negligence is to perfection, and the moſt alluring bait of our enemy: therefore take timely care to prevent it, and account that day loſt, in which thou haſt done no good action. 6.

Chap. XIII.

How to govern our Senſuality. Keep thy heart diſingaged from earthly

earthly creatures. 1. And contemplate thy Creators greatnesse, reducing all created perfection to him, the fountaine. 3. And all worldly beauty to heavenly glory. 4. Marking well the craft of the Devill. 5. But in things displeasing to sense, thinke upon Gods eternall decree. 6. So likewise in any sudden or dismall chance, and in all self complacency. 7.

A larger Declaration of this Doctrine.

The appetite is violently bent to seeke its pleasure, and makes use of the Senses to obtain it. 2. The antidot against this poyson, and how to cure the senses, looking abroad, by separating the spirit of each object, from the materiall thing it selfe. 2. Whether it be a creature which hath only a being, 3. Or hath a vegetation and increase. 4. Or hath sense and feeling. 5. Or is indued with

rare

rare beauty. 6. Or excellent perfection. 7. Also when thou undertakest any action. 8. Or refreshest thy Body with Meat and Drinke. 9. Or smellest delicious odors. 10. Or art delighted with musical harmony. 11. Or any other sensible object.

How to raise thy Soule by sensible objects to contemplate the word Incarnate: Examples; By the sight of poore Cottages, Stones, the Earth, Sun, Water, &c. In tasting Wine, or smelling, In cloathing and uncloathing thy selfe, in hearing noyses, or the Clocke striking, in time of sadnesse. 12.

Other meanes to meditate upon sensible objects. 13. By considering how meane the best of them are in themselves. 14. As the Sunne brightnesse. 15. The Heavens greatnesse. 16. The Birds melody. 17. Walking abroad. 18. Marking the flight of the Fowle. 19.

In time of Winde, Thunder, Storms. 20. Also upon all other occasions, against. 21. Looking upon Christ crucified. 22. On the image of the blessed Virgin. 23. And the pictures of Saints. 24. Of entrest between Churches. 25. Finally, make all objects and accidents, instruments to their perfection.

How we regulate the Tongue. Much talke hinders devotion. Long discourses. Vaine expressions. And all talking of thy own affaires. Of thy neighbours. Where it is lawfull willingly to check, reprove, and admonish another, and when not. To praise, and dispraise.

Chap. XIII.

Of other vertues to be observed in fighting against the Enemies. Most which are chiefly to

fight-

fight with. 2. But when they appear not, seek them. 3.

Chap. XV.

What course he must take, who is conquered, & grievously wounded by his enemies. When thou art fall'n, rise with speed, And pray with fervour. 1. Be not over solicitous or fearfull. 2. But be diligent, and use violence to thine own inclination; recovering the quiet of thy Soule, and Reconciliation to thy SoveRaign. 3. By forgetting thy faults. 4.

Chap. XVI.

That we should keep our hearts ever quiet and joyfull in our Lord. No accidents can justly deprive us of quiet; for though we must needs abhor things contrary to nature, yet we may love them as comming from Gods Permission, and so conform our selves to his holy Will. To obtain this quiet, thou art to appoint a Sentinell. 1. And when thou art surprised with

per-

perplexity, returne with all diligence to quiet thy heart. 2. And therefore admit of no new affections, before thou hast offered them up to God, 3. and mortified thy will and desire, 4. which is the surest way to remain in peace. 5.

Chap. XVII.

That pious purposes, are sometimes deceits of the Devill, to hinder our progresse in vertues. For he suggests unto us desires to fight against former faults, that we may neglect the present. 1. And fall into selfe-complacency. 2. Therefore thou art to fight actually with thy neerest foes, and not to irritate them which are quiet, 3. unlesse thou art well versed in the acts of that vertue. 4. Be not careless of small defects. 5. Three things make our designs fruitlesse. First, the relying upon our own strength. 6. Secondly, the want of force to go through with them. 7. Thirdly, the not levelling

willing at the right hand. 8.

Chap. XVIII.

How the Devill strives to withdraw us from the way of vertue. This deceit of the enemy is exemplified in a sick person, falling into impatience upon pious pretences, 1. and over-earnestly desirous of health. 2. The remedy whereof is, to admit of no purposes, which thou canst not present by pious execution, And to perswade thy selfe, that either they would not have their effect, or, that God would not receive them from thy unworthy hands. 3. There are divers pretences for impatience, but all unwarrantable. 5. (As is explained by an example.) The remedy of all which is to separate the paine from the pretended circumstances. 6. And not to desire a freedom from thy tryall. But to conforme thy will to Gods. 8. Yet thou mayst make use of lawfull meanes, so thou take heed of self-love.

How

How to oppose the Devill, striving to deceive us with indiscretion, and pressing us to afflict our bodies. 1. Which though it is sometimes good, yet it must be prudently tempered. 2. For all cannot imitate the Saints in austerity of life, but each one may imitate their vertues. 3. Yet beware of the other extreme, which is, to admit thy selfe overmuch to delicacies, &c. under pretext of health or the better performance of thy duty; Discretion therefore is the best director in this matter of mortification. 4. And also in the acquisition of vertues; which must be done by degrees. 5. And one by one, rather than all, or many together, because the obtaining of any one vertue, is a preparation to all the rest. 6.

Further advices for the obtaining of vertues: First, thou must resolve to suffer. 2. Thou

must

must bear a great love to vertue 3. Thou art to practise it upon all occasions. 4. Apply all thy exercises to this end. 5. Form frequent acts thereof. 6. Think upon such passages of Scripture, as concern, and commend it. 7. Make use of Jaculatory prayers, 8. Which being ayded with two wings will soare up to heaven. 9. Above all things, thou art to make a continuall progresse, 10. (For by going forward, thy strength increaseth.) 11. Till thou art gotten up the mountaine of perfection. 12. Thou art also to seek out all occasions of practising vertue, especially such as are contrary to thy Sensuality. 13. This being the most proportionate meanes to attaine to it. 14. And comming from Gods providence, for thy particular profit. 15. The mistake of some rectified. 16. To suffer voluntarily by them whom thou hast obliged,

liged, is to draw vertue from sin and malice. 17. *Receive therefore the bitter cup mixed by thy heavenly Physician.*

How to make use of sundry occasions in the exercise of one vertue. 1. *In all occurring accidents of suffering,* 2. *Make acts of that vertue thou then practisest: Examples, in the vertue of Patience, Humility, Obedience, Poverty, Charity.* 3. *As concerning the time, thou art to stay in the practice of each vertue, thy Director must be judge.* 4. *Yet thou maist know thy progresse by these signes: First, if thou losest not courage in time of desolation; Secondly, If the rebellion of thy Sensuality be weakn'd.* 5. *But take heed to think thy selfe a Conqueror, because Vice may be cloathed in Vertues dresse, and thou hast still much to doe.* 6. *And therefore art to look forward upon what thou yet wanteſt.* 7. *And to*

pursue thy exercises with patience and constancy.

Chap. XIX.

How our enemy endeavours to make our vertues instrumentall to our ruine.

By making us take pleasure in them. 1. *But doe thou consider thine owne nothing,* 2. *And mark well what is in thee of thine owne goods, and what of Gods gifts: What thou wert from eternity, what in time.* 4. *What good thou canst doe of thy selfe, and what evill thou either hast or mightest have done; Whereby, thou mayst justly think thy selfe the worst of all men.* 5. *Yet be just in thy self-accusation.* 6. *And not only acknowledge thine owne baseneſſe, but use thy selfe accordingly.* 7. *And stick to this, amidst all praise or applause of others.* 8. *And let not the me-*

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mory of thy good deeds, puff thee up with vanity. 9. For thou wilt find the best of them very imperfect, 10. And that thou hast no colour to glory in them, but to accuse thy want of duty. 11. Learn therefore Humility, which is the foundation of all vertues; and without which thou art lesse than nothing. 12. It being the onely way to find praise, and please God. 13. To whom thou art bound, for permitting thee to be scorned; as also to them that doe it. 14. Be ever wary of the Devill and of thine owne inclination. 15.

Of Rash-Judgement; which springs from Self-esteem, and Pride. 1. The Devill strives to keep open our senses, upon our neighbours actions; but we must be as diligent to shun, as he is to lay his plots. First, by denying to give any sentence. 2. Secondly, by looking homewards upon

our ſelves; where we ſhall find ſome root of the ſame fault we blame in them. 3. *If the fault be manifeſt, put a charitable conſtruction upon it; If monſtrous, have recourſe to Gods ſecret judgements; and tremble at the proceedings of his Providence.* 4. *And know, that all Charity proceeds from Gods good ſpirit, and all Bitterneſſe from the Devill.* 5.

Of the means to ſhield our ſelves againſt the attempts of our enemies at the time of Death. *The way to be then conquerours, is to fall upon our enemies before hand.* 1. *And to make timely preparation, by ſtudying now the anſwers of the foure challenges our enemies wil then ſend us.* 2.

The firſt is againſt Faith; *and the remedy is, to retreat from thine Underſtanding to thy Will.* 4. *And to give no anſwer*

to thy enemies queſtions, 5. *But to fix thy thoughts upon Chriſt crucified.* 6.

The ſecond aſſault, is of Deſpaire; *where thou art to obſerve this certaine rule, &c. And to have a perfect hope and humble confidence in God.* 7. *And never to diſtruſt his mercy, and the merits of his Paſſion.* 8.

The Third is, of Vain-glory, *which is conquer'd by diſtruſt of thy ſelfe, and truſt in God.* 9.

The Fourth is, by False Illuſions, *againſt which have recourſe to the confeſſion of thine owne nothing: and admit of no apparences, though they ſeeme to come from heaven.* 10. *After theſe generall temptations, follow others in particular.* 11.

Chap. XX.

That we muſt never flatter our ſelves as having ſubdued our enemies.

But often renew our exerciſes, for perfection is very high and hard to be obtained. 1. 2.

Chap. XXI.

Of Holy Prayer.

The Fourth maine Weapon, in this ſpirituall warfare. 1. *Which muſt have theſe properties: Firſt, a Deſire to ſerve God: Secondly, Perfect Faith: Thirdly, Conformity to Gods will, becauſe thine own will is ſubject to error, but the divine will is infallibly right. Fourthly, A connexion with practice. Fifthly, Thanksgiving for received favours. Sixthly, A reflexion upon Gods goodneſſe and promiſe; and up-*

on

on Christs Passion. Seventhly, Perseverance. Prayer must also be strengthned with hope. And though God seems to reject thy prayer, yet persevere knocking; and alwayes gratefully thanking him, as well when he deny's as grants thy request.

Chap. XXII.

What Mentall Prayer is, and what Contemplation.

Mentall Prayer includes alwaies either a virtuall petition of something, 1. 2. 3. 4. *Or an actuall asking of it, by words expressed in the mind.* 5. 6.

Chap. XXIII.

How to joyne Contemplation to this inward Prayer. By taking some points of Christs death or passion, 1. *And applying his actions to the ver-*

tion is past, stand still upon thy guard. 8.

Chap. XII.

How to fight against slackness and Negligence. Follow holy inspirations speedily. For this is of great consequence to conquer Sloath, and having couragiously set upon thy worke, carefully prosecute the same. 1. *The fruit whereof must be discovered,* 2. *And the pains disguised,* 3. *Unlesse there be a reall disability.* 4. *But the best way to get a custome of enduring, is to expect Crosses continually, and not to seeke how to avoid them.* 5. *How prejudiciall Negligence is to perfection, and the most alluring bait of our enemy: therefore take timely care to prevent it, and account that day lost, in which thou hast done no good action.* 6.

Chap. XIII.

How to govern our Sensuality. Keep thy heart disingaged from earthly

earthly creatures. 1: And contemplate thy Creators greatnesse, reducing all created perfection to him, the fountaine. 3. And all worldly beauty to heavenly glory. 4. Marking wel the craft of the Devill. 5. But in things displeasing to sense, think upon Gods eternall decree. 6. So likewise in any sudden or dismall chance, and in all self complacency. 7.

A larger Declaration of this Doctrine.

The appetite is violently bent to seeke its pleasure, and makes use of the Senses to obtain it. 1. The antidot against this poyson, and how to curb the senses roaming abroad, by separating the spirit of each object, from the materiall thing it selfe. 2. Whether it be a creature which hath only a being, 3. Or hath a vegetation and increase. 4. Or hath sense and feeling. 5. Or is indued with

rare beauty. 6. Or excellent perfection. 7. Also when thou undertakest any action. 8. Or refectest thy body with Meat and Drinke. 9. Or smellest delicious odors. 10. Or art delighted with musical harmony. 11. Or any other sensible object.

How to raise thy Soule by sensible objects to contemplate the word Incarnate: Examples; By the sight of poore Cottages, Stones, the Earth, Sun, Water, &c. In tasting Wine, in smelling, In cloathing, and uncloathing thy selfe, in hearing noyses, or the Clocke striking, In time of sadnesse. 12.

Other meanes to meditate upon sensible objects. 13. By considering how meane the best of them are in themselues. 14. As the Suns brightnesse. 15. The Heavens greatnesse. 16. The Birds melody. 17. Walking abroad. 18. Marking the flight of the Fowls. 19.

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In time of Windes, Thunder, Storms. 20. Also upon all other occasions, as of griefe. 21. Looking upon Christ crucified. 22. On the image of the blessed Virgin. 23. And the pictures of Saints. 24. Or entrest into Churches. 25. Finally, make all objects and accidents, instruments to thy perfection. 26.

How to regulate the Tongue. Much talke proceedes from vaine confidence. 27. How to speake and avoid long discourses. 28. And pertinent expressions. 29. And all talking of thy own affaires. 30. Of thy neighbours. 31. How to be willingly ignorant of Gods secrets, and prudently learned, when thy Tongue is to utter. 32. The praise and profit of Silence. 33.

Chap. XIV.

Of the order to be observed in fighting against our enemies. Many which are the greatest. 1. And single men the fiercest to fight

fight with. 2. But when they appear not, seek them. 3.

Chap. XV.

What course he must take, who is conquered, & grievously wounded by his enemies. When thou art fall'n, rise with speed, And pray with fervour. 1. Be not over solicitous or fearfull. 2. But be diligent, and use violence to thine own inclination; recovering the quiet of thy Soule, and Reconciliation to thy Soveraign. 3. By forgetting thy faults. 4.

Chap. XVI.

That we should keep our hearts ever quiet and joyfull in our Lord. No accident can justly deprive us of quiet; for though we must needs abhor things contrary to nature, yet we may love them as comming from Gods Permission, and so conforme our selves to his holy Will. To obtain this quiet, thou art to appoint a sentinell. 1. And when thou art surprised with per-

perplexity, returne with all diligence to quiet thy heart. 2. And therefore admit of no new affections, before thou hast offered them up to God, 3. and mortified thy will and desire, 4. which is the surest way to remain in peace. 5.

Chap. XVII.

That pious purposes, are sometimes deceits of the Devill, to hinder our progresse in vertues. For he suggests unto us desires to fight against former faults, that we may neglect the present. 1. And fall into selfe-complacency. 2. Therefore thou art to fight actually with thy neerest foes, and not to irritate them which are quiet, 3. unlesse thou art well vers'd in the acts of that vertue. 4. Be not careless of small defects. 5. Three things make our designs fruitlesse. First, the relying upon our own strength. 6. Secondly, the want of force to go through with them. 7. Thirdly, the not levelling

willing at the right end. 8.

Chap. XVIII.

How the Devill strives to withdraw us from the way of vertue. This deceit of the enemy is exemplified in a sick person, falling into impatience, upon pious pretences, 1. *and over-earnestly desirous of health.* 2. *The remedy whereof is, to admit of no purposes, which thou canst not presently put in execution, And to perswade thy selfe, that either they would not have their effect; or, that God would not receive them from thy unworthy hands.* 3. *There are divers pretentes for impatience, but all unwarrantable.* 5. *(As is explained by an example.) The remedy of all which is to separate the paine from the pretended circumstances.* 6. *And not to desire a freedom from thy tresse.* 7. *But to conforme thy will to Gods.* 8. *Yet thou mayst make use of lawfull means, so thou take heed of self-love.*

How

How to oppose the Devill, striving to deceive us with indiscretion, and pressing us to afflict our bodies. 1. Which though it is sometimes good, yet it must be prudently tempered. 2. For all cannot imitate the Saints in austerity of life, but each one may imitate their vertues. 3. Yet beware of the other extreme, which is, to indulge thy selfe overmuch to delicacies, &c. under pretext of health or the better performance of thy duty; Discretion therefore is the best director in this matter of mortification. 4. And also in the acquisition of vertues; which must be done by degrees. 5. And one by one, rather than all, or many together, because the obtaining of any one vertue, is a preparation to all the rest. 6.

Further advices for the obtaining of vertues. First, thou must resolve to suffer. 2. Thou

must

must bear a great love to vertue 3. Thou art to practise it upon all occasions. 4. Apply all thy exercises to this end. 5. Form frequent acts thereof. 6. Think upon such passages of Scripture, as concern, and commend it. 7. Make use of Jaculatory prayers, 8. Which being ayded with two wings will soare up to heaven. 9. Above all things, thou art to make a continuall progresse, 10. (For by going forward, thy strength increaseth.) 11. Till thou art gotten up the mountaine of perfection. 12. Thou art also to seek out all occasions of practising vertue, especially such as are contrary to thy Sensuality. 13. This being the most proportionate meanes to attaine to it. 14. And comming from Gods providence, for thy particular profit. 15. The mistake of some rectified. 16. To suffer voluntarily by them whom thou hast obliged.

liged, is to draw vertue from sin and malice. 17. Receive therefore the bitter cup mixed by thy heavenly Physician.

How to make use of sundry occasions in the exercise of one vertue. 1. In all occurring accidents of suffering, 2. Make acts of that vertue thou then practisest: Examples, in the vertue of Patience, Humility, Obedience, Poverty, Charity. 3. As concerning the time, thou art to stay in the practice of each vertue, thy Director must be judge. 4. Yet thou maist know thy progresse by these signes: First, if thou losest not courage in time of desolation; Secondly, If the rebellion of thy Sensuality be weakn'd. 5. But take heed to think thy selfe a Conqueror, because Vice may be cloathed in Vertues dresse, and thou hast still much to doe. 6. And therefore art to look forward upon what thou yet wanteſt. 7. And to

pursue thy exercises with patience and constancy.

Chap. XIX.

How our enemy endeavours to make our vertues instrumentall to our ruine.

By making us take pleasure in them. 1. *But doe thou consider thine owne nothing,* 2. *And mark well what is in thee of thine owne goods, and what of Gods gifts: What thou wert from eternity, what in time.* 4. *What good thou canst doe of thy selfe, and what evill thou either hast or mightest have done; Whereby, thou mayst justly think thy selfe the worst of all men.* 5. *Yet be just in thy self-accusation.* 6. *And not only acknowledge thine owne baseneſſe, but use thy selfe accordingly.* 7. *And stick to this, amidst all praise or applause of others.* 8. *And let not the memory*

mory of thy good deeds, puff thee up with vanity. 9. For thou wilt find the best of them very imperfect, 10. And that thou hast no colour to glory in them, but to accuse thy want of duty. 11. Learn therefore Humility, which is the foundation of all vertues; and without which thou art lesse than nothing. 12. It being the onely way to find praise, and please God. 13. To whom thou art bound, for permitting thee to be scorned; as also to them that doe it. 14. Be ever wary of the Devill and of thine owne inclination. 15.

Of Rash-Judgement; which springs from Self-esteem, and Pride. 1. The Devill strives to keep open our senses, upon our neighbours actions; but we must be as diligent to shun, as he is to lay his plots; First, by denying to give any sentence. 2. Secondly, by looking homewards upon

our ſelves; where we ſhall find ſome root of the ſame fault we blame in them. 3. *If the fault be manifeſt, put a charitable conſtruction upon it; If monſtrous, have recourſe to Gods ſecret judgements; and tremble at the proceedings of his Providence.* 4. *And know, that all Charity proceeds from Gods good ſpirit, and all Bitterneſſe from the Devill.* 5.

Of the means to ſhield our ſelves againſt the attempts of our enemies at the time of Death. *The way to be then conquerours, is to fall upon our enemies before-hand.* 1. *And to make timely preparation, by ſtudying now the anſwers of the foure challenges our enemies wil then ſendus.* 2.

The firſt is againſt Faith; *and the remedy is, to retreat from thine Underſtanding to thy Will.* 4. *And to give no anſwer*

to thy enemies queſtions, 5. *But to fix thy thoughts upon Chriſt crucified.* 6.

The ſecond aſſault, is of Deſpaire; *where thou art to obſerve this certaine rule, &c. And to have a perfect hope and humble confidence in God.* 7. *And never to diſtruſt his mercy, and the merits of his Paſſion.* 8.

The Third is, of Vain-glory, *which is conquer'd by diſtruſt of thy ſelfe, and truſt in God.* 9.

The Fourth is, by Falſe Illuſions, *againſt which have recourſe to the confeſſion of thine owne nothing: and admit of no apparences, though they ſeeme to come from heaven.* 10. *After theſe generall temptations, follow others in particular.* 11.

Chap. XX.
That we muſt never flatter our ſelves as having ſubdued our enemies.

But often renew our exerciſes, for perfection is very high and hard to be obtained. 1. 2.

Chap. XXI.
Of Holy Prayer.

The Fourth maine Weapon, in this ſpirituall warfare. 1. *Which muſt have theſe properties: Firſt, a Deſire to ſerve God: Secondly, Perfect Faith: Thirdly, Conformity to Gods will; becauſe thine own will is ſubject to error, but the divine will is infallibly right. Fourthly, A connexion with practice. Fifthly, Thanksgiving for received favours. Sixthly, A reflexion upon Gods goodneſſe and promiſe; and up-*

on

on Christs Passion. Seventhly, Perseverance. Prayer must also be strengthned with hope. And though God seems to reject thy prayer, yet persevere knocking; and alwayes gratefully thanking him, as well when he deny's as grants thy request.

Chap. XXII.

What Mentall Prayer is, and what Contemplation.

Mentall Prayer includes alwaies either a virtuall petition of something, 1. 2. 3. 4. *Or an actuall asking of it, by words expressed in the mind.* 5. 6.

Chap. XXIII.

How to joyne Contemplation to this inward Prayer. By taking some points of Christs death or passion, 1. *And applying his actions to the ver-*

tue thou demandeſt. As for example to Patience. 2. Marking how meekly he ſuffered; and learning thereby to ſuffer patiently thy ſmaller adverſities. 3. And compelling thy will, to take up thy Croſſe quietly. 4.

Chap. XXIV.

Of another certaine manner of Prayer, by way of praying and meditating together. 1. Conſidering Chriſts merits, and the content his heavenly Father took in his obedience, 2. And preſenting them both to God. 3.

Chap. XXV.

Of a way of praying by the Interceßion of the B. Virgin. 1. Firſt, fix thy mind upon th' eternall Father. 2. Conſidering the content he had in him ſelfe.

ſelfe (concerning her) from all eternity. 3. And the wonders he wrought in her, when ſhe had a being. 4. Secondly, upon God the Sonne. 5. Laſtly, upon the ſacred Virgin. 6.

Chap. XXVI.

How to pray and meditate by meanes of the Holy Angels and heavenly Citizens.

Firſt, addreſſe thy ſelfe to the eternall Father. 1. Next unto the glorious Angels and Saints themſelves. 2. Dividing them into quires, according to the dayes of the week. 4. But every day praying to the Bleſſed Virgin, to thy particular Patron, and to S. Joſeph.

Chap. XXVII.

How to meditate upon Christs Passion, and to enkindle holy affections. 1. By reflexion upon his love and goodnesse. 2. How to get constant hope, 3. And a spirituall joy. 4. As also affections of sorrow and compassion, 5. And contrition for thy Sinnes. 7. With a perfect hatred of them. 8. And to admire Gods bounty, by considering; First, Who suffers? Secondly, For whom? Thirdly, By whom? Fourthly, What? Fifthly, How? Sixthly, When and where? 9.

A further Declaration of the profit which may be drawne from the Meditation upon Christ's Passion, and particularly of the imitation of His Vertues. The first profit is, a Confusion at the sight of our imperfections. The second, a desire and demand of pardon,

with

with a resolution of amendment. The third, a persecution of our passions. The fourth, an imitation of Christs Vertues.

Another way to Meditate on the Passion;

By considering, First, how Christs Soule carries it selfe towards the Heavenly Father. Secondly, how the Father to-towards Christs Soule. Thirdly, how the Soule towards it selfe and it's sacred body. Fourthly, how thy Saviour carries Himselfe towards thee. Fifthly, how thou shouldst cary thy selfe towards thy Saviour. Christ Crucified is the best Booke to reade in, and wherein to learne all vertues; if thou makest fit application to thy particular practice.

Chap. XXVIII.

Of ſenſible Devotion, and Spirituall Dryneſſe.

Devotion is beſt knowne by the effects it produceth. 1. *How to make profit of all ſpirituall ſweetneſſe in Devotion.* 2. *Three cauſes of Spirituall Dryneſſe, The Devill, Our ſelves, and God.* 3. *Search out the true cauſe thereof.* 4. *And keepe on thy accuſtomed practices of piety, without ſeeking outward comforts.* 5. *Nor pray to have comfort in thy Croſſe.* 7. *Becauſe to ſuffer for God, is the beſt Prayer, and makes thee truly devout,* 8. *And not the feeling of ſenſible Devotion,* 9. *Wherein many are deceived.* 10. *What thou art to do in time of diſtreſſe and derelicti-on.* 11.

Chap. XXIX.

That the worthy frequenting of the most Blessed Sacrament, is an efficacious meanes to conquer our Passions. 1. *Meditate the Day before thy Communion, of thy Saviours desire, &c. to come to thee,* 2. *Who affirmes that his delights are to be with us.* 3. *And moove thy Soule to a reciprocall desire and affection towards him.* 5. *Then provoke thy passions to battail.* 6. *Beeing neare the time of Communion, thou art to feare thy selfe, but to have confidence in thy Saviour.* 7. *After Communion lay open thy wants,* 8. *And constantly hope for the Divine helpe.* 9.

Chap.

Chap. XXX.

How to excite in us affections of love, by the Sacred Communion. Consider Gods Liberality, 1. *especially shewed in the holy Communion.* 2. *Weighing First, who it is that comes thus to thee; Secondly, what hee gives thee; Thirdly, the eternity of his Love, Fourthly, the Purity of his Love. Hence breake forth into admiration, and ravishment to see thy selfe so highly prized, and make an entire oblation of thy selfe to him. And this beeing the chief act of Religion, strive to performe it most perfectly.* 6. *Then dedicate thy selfe to his Service, and freely open to him thy heart.* 7. *But beware of vanity and curiosity. At the time of Communion, Thinke what thou art going to do.*

Thank

Thanke, Adore, Implore. When Domine non ſum dignus, *is ſayd, &c. humble and confound thy ſelfe, yet ſtill raiſing up thy heart with hope. 8. Having communicated, entertaine thy gueſt with amorous expreſſions. 9. And laſtly, offer up the holy Son, to his heavenly Father. 10.*

Chap. XXXI.

Of ſpirituall Communion. Thou mayſt thus often communicate. 1. By frequent deſires. 2. And it is an excellent exerciſe againſt paſſions. 3. If thou makeſt this right uſe thereof, here preſcribed.

Chap. XXXII.

Of Thanks-giving.

All goodneſſe is from God. 1. To whom therefore all gratitude

tude is due. 2. First, therefore, acknowledge his goodneſſe, and then thine owne unworthineſſe. 3.

Chap. XXXIII.

Of the perfect oblation of thy ſelfe to God.

First, conſider Gods greatneſſe and glory. Secondly, adore and acknowledge him, &c. Thirdly, Offer up all thy intereſt in any thing. Fourthly, unite all to the Merits of Chriſt, preſenting both together to the eternall Father. 5. So likewiſe in offering thy works of piety. 6. How to offer up Chriſts Actions for our offences. 7.

Another manner of perfect Oblation.

Chriſt here on Earth, offered not onely himſelfe, but alſo all us, to his Father; make thou the

the ſame Oblation. How to know the ſincerity of thy Oblation.

Chap. XXXIV.

How to Petition for Divine Grace.

Firſt, Encourage thy ſelfe with confidence in Gods Goodneſſe. Secondly, Foyne humility with this confidence. Thirdly, Preſſe thy Petition with fervent deſires: the want whereof hinders the effects of our demands. Fourthly, Let not thy Petition want Charity, Perſeverance, or Reſignation.

Chap. XXXV.

Some ſhort obſervations concerning Meditation.

Firſt, Read over-night the matter of thy Meditation. Secondly, reflect upon it in the morning. Thirdly, Weigh his Majeſty

jesty with whom thou art to conferre. Fourthly, Begin with Oblation, and Petition. Fifthly, Apply thy senses to the mystery. Sixthly, Beg what thou intendest to obtaine. Seventhly, after this begin with thy first point, 8. and beware of fancying high mysteries, 9. Or leaving off before the time alotted for Prayer be expired. 10. In the end reflect how thou hast behav'd thy selfe. 11. And be sure to order well the matter of thy Meditation.

Chap. XXXVI.

An exercise before the sacred Communion. 1. The conformation of the place. 2. Beg of thy Saviour to fit up thy poor house. 3. Think what guest is to lodge in it. 4. Why he comes, 5. and to whom: And lastly, present thy Petition.

Chap. XXXVII.

How wee may devoutly offer up the Sacrifice of the Masse. 1. *Free thy fancy from all outward Objects.* 2. *In vesting thy selfe, marke each mystery.* 3. *Let thy outward deportment bee decent.* 4. *and thy inward composition, correspondent.* 5. *In thy first* Memento: *To Christs holy Head; To his right hand; To his left-Hand; To his sacred Heart; To his right-Foot; To his left-Foot.* 6. *In thy second* Memento, *Unite thy affection unto Jesus Christ now present in the Sacrament.*

Chap. XXXVIII.

An exercise after holy Communion. 1. *Representation of the place.* 2. *Imploration of Gods Grace*

Grace. 3. *Conſideration, of him whom thou haſt within thee, and of thine owne unworthineſſe.* 4. *Petition.*

Chap. XXXIX.

A Dayly Examen. 1. *Every Morning thou art to make three acts; of Thanksgiving,* 2. *Of Oblation,* 3. *Of Reſolution. Secondly, at night thou art to examine thy ſelfe: beginning with a generall acknowledgment of Gods Favours, Then begging his Light and Grace, next, deſcending to particulars.* 6. *And indeavour to get a true ſorrow for thy ſins.* 7. *And laſtly implore pardon for the paſt, and protection for the future.* 8.

Another

Another Method of Examitation.

By questioning thy self, First, wherein thou hast offended. Secondly, what occasion'd it. Thirdly, how thou hast practised vertue.

XL.

Being a Conclusion of the whole Book.

This little Book, well practised with perseverance, is sufficient, Supposing thou fightest manfully, without being terrified at thy enemies power, though the victory seemes to come on never so slowly.

FINIS.



Hold thy hand, O Death, whilst Tymes
Conflict begets an Eternall Conquest.

Will: Marshall sculpsit.



A Lively pourtraict of the Spirituall Conquest.

They have disposed Ascension in their hearts. The Law-giver will give a blessing, and they shall ascend from vertue to vertue, by steps and degrees, even to Heaven. Psalm: 83. v: 6. 7. 8.

THE SPIRITVALL CONQUEST,

IN

Five TREATISES,

Enabling all Christian Warriers, to conquer themselves, and come to a vicinity with GOD.

Habacuc. 3. 19.

God our Lord is my strength: he will make my feet as of the Harts: And upon my high places, he the conqueror, will lead me singing in psalms.

AT PARIS, M.DC.LI.

The five Treatiſes *Of the Spiritual Conqueſt.*

The Firſt.

Of the diſcovery of our enemies Ambuſcado's.

The Second.

Of the uſe and practiſe of our Spiritual weapons.

The Third.

Of the ſteps, and degrees of Perfection.

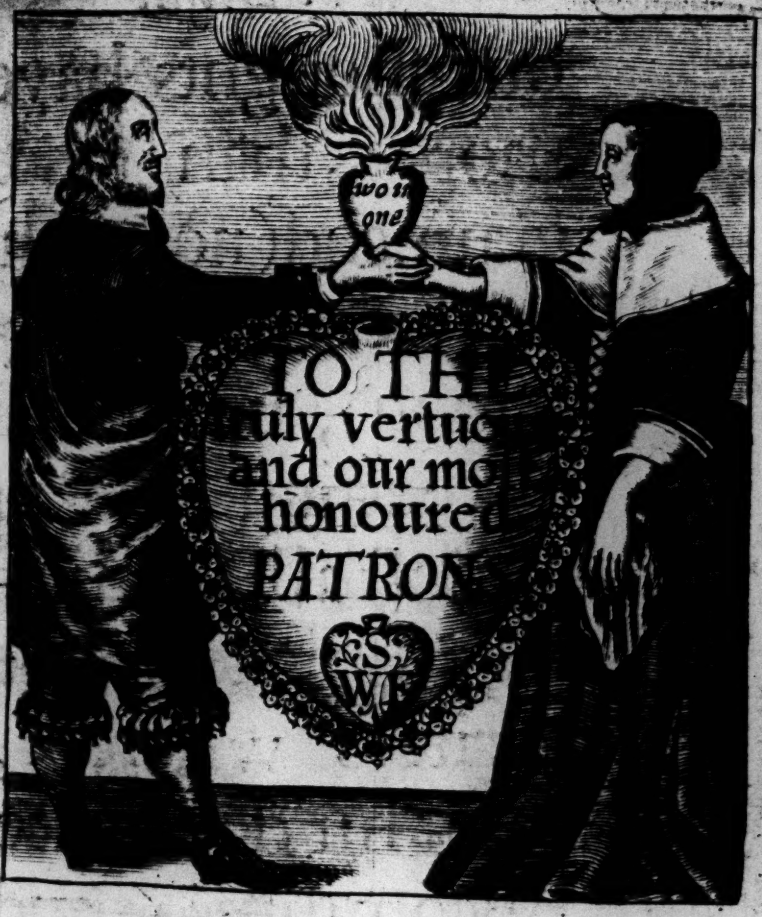
The Fourth.

Of the ſteps and degrees of divine Seraphical Love.

The Fifth, and laſt.

Of the choyceſt Maxim's of Myſtical Divinity.

42.
1. 7.
12.



Right Worthy, and moſt Honoured Patrons,

AMongſt the numberleſs vanities of this life,

our thoughts have more than once glaunced (not without a certain indignation), upon that exceeding folly of almoſt all Dedicatory Epiſtles; the writers whereof, (as if hir'd to make Encomiums, and preſent the world with Panegericks) run over each common place of Rhetorick in the reci-

recital of their Patrons rare parts and qualities, leave no tittle of honour untouch'd, no action of their lives unadmir'd, no prerogative of pedigree unextoll'd, no gift of nature or grace unsumm'd up; and having drain'd their whole stock of invention in this scrupulous inquest after all sorts of

praiſes; conclude finally, that al theſe (and more lines of perfection, than either their modeſty dares relate, or their capacity can reach), do directly concentrate in the unparalell'd breſts of them, whom they thus reſolve to celebrate, canonize and Deify. A proceeding ſo far from pleaſing all ge-

generous, heroick, and diſcerning ſpirits, that it rather puts them to the bluſh, to ſee themſelves more abus'd than adorned, with ſuch plain and palpable flatteries.

We therefore (moſt worthy Patrons), who build upon other principles; and follow a Rule and profeſſion obliging us to

ſincerity : though we moſt willingly acknowledg your temporal and ſpiritual greatneſſes, heartily congratulate your high perfections, and joyfully conſider you mounting up amain the divine ladder of heavenly love & contemplation: Yet we cannot but look upon your ſouls as immured

ſtil

ſtil in walls of clay; we can only judge you to be faithfull pilgrims, not full poſſeſſors; to be valiant champions, not yet crowned conquerors; and therfore we conceive that we may much better complie wth our dutie to God, and our obligation to you, by endeavoring to further you in your ſpiritual

tual progreſs, than to follow you wth Euge's and acclamations, as if you were already arriv'd at the deſired end of your journey.

For this reaſon, we declare, that the primarie motive inducing us to preſent you with this ſmall ſpiritual donative, is the ardent zeal and deſire we have

have of your own happie advancement in ſolid devotion & divine charitie. And in purſuance of this deſign, we

Firſt, diſcover brieflie unto you the moſt common & dangerous ſnares of your ſworn enemies, and ſhew you the ſafe way to ſhun them.

Secondly, we deliver

liver ſpiritual arms into your hands, wherewith to defend your ſelves, & defeat your foes, by reducing the precepts into practice, & furniſhing you with ſuch affective acts & elevations, as may readily ſerve you for reſtauratives againſt fainting in theſe your indefatigable combats.

Third-

Thirdly, we raise you up a ladder of perfection; from the top whereof, (which is perfect indifferencie, resignation, and obedience to Gods Divine will and pleasure), you may comfortablie cast down an eie, and count each step you have taken in your wearisom journey towards your hea-

ven-

venlie *Ieruſalem.*

Fourthly, from this mountain top of perfection, we ſhew you the divers degrees of ſacred and ſeraphical love, which wil lead your elevated ſouls to perfect union with their beloved Bridegroom, and ſettle them in the ſweet embraces and boſom of the divinity.

And

And lastly, we have made a collection of the chiefest and choicest Maxim's of mystical Theologie, to which you may have continual recourse, by which you may solve all your doubts, and in which you may secure your consciences, upon all emergent occasions and difficulties, arising

ſing in this your bleſſed enterpriſe & tendance to eternal felicitie. Theſe are the choice flowers which we have gathered in the ſeveral gardens of ſacred writers, and bound up in this poſie for your preſent uſe, comfort, and incouragement.

The other end we aim at in this our

our dedication, is to give you, & poſteritie, a publick and perpetual teſtimonie of our grateful hearts for your many ſignal favors and temporal benefits; wherewith you have more obliged us, and our neereſt friends, than we can either tell how to repay in any other coin, or expreſs in any particular

cular tearms: And therefore we desire you to receive this our thankfull acknowledgement and real protestation, proceeding from both our united mindes and mouthes, as an absolute assurance of our truly devoted service to your selves, and all the worthy branches of your most honoured family.

THE FIRST TREATISE OF THE SPIRITVALL CONQUEST:

Or,

A plain discovery of the Ambuscado's, and wily Stratagems of our Enemies, in this our daily War-fare.

Enabling the Christian Warrier to foresee, and avoid them.

Psal. 56. 7.

They prepared a snare for my feet,

(but)

Psal. 123. 7.

The snare is broken, and we are delivered.

AT PARIS. MDC. LI.

To the devout Champions, tending to perfection.

You have beheld, (O Dear Champions of heaven) a famous Duel, fought between the Senſe and the Soul, the Eleſh and the Spirit, the Animal and the Spiritual man; you have been Spectators of this Grand-plea, and preſent at this renowned trial; where, before the ſupream Tribunal of Truth and Reaſon, the Animal man was convened and

* In this precedent Treatiſe of our learned and devout authour, Fa. John caſtaniza.

Petrus Damianus. Serm. 30.

and arraigned at the Bar; had his own thoughts, words, and works for his casting, convincing, and condemning Jury; heaven and earth, irrefragable witnesses against him; his own guilty Conscience, a constant accuser of him; the said Truth and Reason, the impartiall Judges, pronouncing sentence upon him; and his own soul, the happy executioner of their just verdict: Which lifting up the sword of holy zeal and indignation, gave such home-blows (of Contrition for the past, and Resolution of amendment for the future) to his heart; that blood of tears and joy, seem'd to stream from the wounds; and the whole man, first made a true Martyr of Pennance, is now become a faithful witness of Gods infinit mercies.

You

You have seen (I say) a notable siege, lay'd to this rebellious City, [mans sensuality], which for it's ditches of defence, had depths of impiety; for walls and rampiers, obstinacy and insolency; for towers and bulwarks, mountaines of pride and presumption; for arms and weapons, reluctancy to goodness, and resistance of Gods inspirations; for artillery, tumults; for dwelling-houses, dens of hypocrisie: for palaces, labyrinths of dissimulation; for temple, proper-will; for idol, self-love; for Captain, blindness; for Souldiers, exorbitant passions; for counsel, folly; and for constancy, perverse opinions.

Yet Babylon is fall'n, *this treacherous town is taken, sensuality is subdued: So great is*

the force of Grace, and ſo happy the ſucceſs of Truth and Reaſon! And which is moſt worthy of joyful admiration, perfect liberty is gained by this captivity, high advancement by this down-fall, holy greatneſſe by this annihilation, and by this death, a happy life. O bleſſed Conqueſt!

But leſt this now ſtifled fire of rebellion *ſhould again burſt forth into new flames of* ſedition, *and ſo your recidivations prove more dangerous than your firſt diſeaſes;* (*For Alas! ſuch is mans inconſtancie, that* he now ſeems in a firm ſtation, *who ſoon falls and fades away into nothing: ſuch is the nature of his quarrel, that it hath no other point of quiet in this life, than the laſt full period of his death: ſuch are his*

Who ſo ſtands let him look that he falls not. 1. Cor. 10. 12.

he watcheth enemies, that they are euer waiting for aduantages; and such is his known wickednesse, that it perpetually wooes, and eggs him on to wickednesse; how highly doth it import you (O pious Souldiers) to stand constantly and continually to your spirituall armes, & to keep an vninterrupted guard vpon all the gates of your inward and outward senses and appetites.

Mans life is a warfare vpon earth. Iob 7. 2.

To this end, we haue here presented you, (out of our Authour), with a breif draught of your enemies chiefest postures; shew'd you from what grounds they take their vsuall aduantages against you, and discouered where they lay their perilous ambushes to intrap you; that being thus duly fore-warn'd *of your eminent dan-*

castanira.

Foreseen darts, do least hurt. *Greg. hom. 35. in Euang.*

ger, you may be fitly and fully arm'd for your necessary defence, preparedly attend their approaches, undauntedly receive their charges, courageously repell their violence; and finally, return loaden with glorious Trophees of victory, into your own peacefull consciences; and keep there a delicious Sabbath of repose in the happy enjoyments of unspeakable delights.

Call'd by Isay; Sabbatum deliciatum? Esa. 58. 13

The Seven chief Ambushes of our Enemies.

1. SElf-love, *which is the roote of all sin, and cause of all inproficiency in the way of perfection.* 2. *Few are found free from it.* 3. *To avoid this snare we must seek Gods honour in all our actions.* 4. *To self-love belongs* unmortified sensualitie, *which must be tamed by cutting off superfluities.* 5. *To the same pertain* Pride, Self-conceit, &c. *Which must be remedied by the Practice of humilitie.* 6. *Also the* passions of our inferiour nature, Love, Hatred, &c. *To which we must oppose Peace of heart.* 7. *Lastly, the* adhering to our own wills and judgements; *which must be cured by Obedience.* 8. *Now a triple Obedience.*

2. Immoderate affection to creatures. 1. *This distracts us from our Creator; against which we must provide Poverty of spirit.* 2. Affections to persons *corrupt our judgements.* 3. *We must remedy it, by loving all impartially*, in and for God. 4. Spirituall comforts *may be sometimes snares of the Devil, therefore we must not stay in them, but transcend them.*

3. Extroversion, *or an inordinate application of our selves to externall things,* 1. *Which choakes up Devotion: therefore we must not thrust our selves upon imployments,* 2. *But curb our fancies;* 3. *Perform works of obedience, necessity, and charity, without ingaging our affections;* 4. *And strive to get into our interiour,* 5. *By fixing our heart on Christ crucified.*

4. Bitterness of heart, *sadness, frowardnesse, &c.* 2. *All which proceed either from nature, indiscretion, thoughtfulnesse, presumption, or immortification;* 3. *And must be sweetned with Charity.* 4. *To this belong a certain* grudging at Gods

vidence; *which must be avoided by a cordial Resignation.*

5. Scrupulosity, *inward affliction, fearfulness, &c.* 1. *Which aym at the destruction of our Faith and Confidence in God.* 2. *To avoid this, we must rely upon God and our guide.* 3. *And assure our selves that we cannot erre in Confidence, if we fall not into Negligence.*

6. Excessive and unnecessary study, 1. *Which busies the Understanding, but leaves the Will barren.* 2. *Puffs us up with Vanity, but leaves us empty [illegible] Piety. The remedy is to rectify our intentions in our studies.*

7. Tepidity and coldness in Devotion, 1. *Which is the bane of all spirituality. We must always go forward towards perfection, with perseverance, and excite our sluggishness with frequent aspirations.* 2. *An excellent document of* Saint Anthony.



Latet hostis, et otia ducis?

The first Ambush.

Self-love.

Few are found free from it.

SELF-LOVE (in the Spirit's Dictionary) is the root of *all sin*, and we may safely add, and avouch it to be the *cause of all inproficiency* in the way of perfection. For such subtil nature so constantly seeks her self in all her actions and omissions; that even the *spirituall man*, who treads in the pleasant paths of piety, is subject to be drawn into this dangerous ambush: He will find (upon due examination) some sinister, and self-intention creeping in, and corrupting his sincerest endeavours; and perceive, (unless highly illuminated), that there is more of private commodity than pure and perfect charity,

Self-love is the root of all sin, and cause of all inproficiency in the way of perfection.

Read the second ch. of the *Spir. Con.*

rity, in his most transcendent and heroique exercises.

Few are found free from it.

2. Who is not generally more diligent in the performance of his duty, for the fear of hell, and hope of heaven, than for the sole and substantiall love of his Creator? who hath not rather some small clause and secret condition of self-interest in his actions, than the only fulfilling of Gods holy will, and the following of his Divine inspirations?

Whom shall we find, though never so great pretenders to perfection, so totally untangled from this net of Self-love, that they neither hover after humane respects and praises; nor look upon rewards or punishments; nor overvalue their own wayes and exercises; nor solace themselves with the sweets of sensible devotion; nor please themselves with their high-towring contemplations, and raptures into Gods immediate perfections; nor finally, dresse up devotion by the pattern of their own passions, and so fall in love with their own conceptions,

ceptions, and make to themselves *in Bethel golden calves*, in stead of the *Cherubins in Jerusalem*? Whose will is so truly devested from all propriety, as to remain untouch'd, unmov'd, undisquieted, resolute and resigned, in all temporall chances and changes, and in all spirituall dryness, desolation, dereliction, and affliction whatsoever? 3.Reg. 13.8.

3. To avoid this pernicious snare, we must strive to level all our actions at Gods pure honour and pleasure, as the only end we aym at, the only object of our love, life, and labour; in whom only, and not in the best of his creatures, is found true quiet and content. To avoid this snare, we must seek Gods honour in our actions.

4. Unmortifi'd *Sensuality*, is the dear darling of *Self-love*; This proposes nothing but pleasure and pastime to our seduced appetites, roamings abroad to our affections, makes us sedulous to satisfie our fancies, covetous to content our curiosities, to hearken after vanities, to glut our gusts with dainties, and to evaporate our pretious time and talents in extravagant adhesions to To self-love, belongs unmortified sensuality, Read the 7. ch. of the Arraignment

creatures,

creatures. What hope, Alas! of internal repose and recollection, where such tumults and troubles prepossess the spirit? What place remains for the holy entertainments of heavenly love, when such affections have fill'd up each corner of the heart?

Which must be tamed by cutting off superfluities.

Wherefore a soul that seeks God, must scorn to rest in these seeming goods she must banish all superfluities, and be content with the meer supplies of her necessities; she must admit of no excesse in meat, drink, sleep, attire, talk, or other solaces whatsoever. if she really intends to make the body pliable to the spirit, and the spirit proper to tend to perfection.

To the same belong pride self-conceit, &c.

5. *Pride, presumption, vanity, self-esteem, self-complacency, self-content, self-praise, self-seeking, self-delight*, with all the rest of like nature, are but several noozes of the same net, and sprouts, out of the same main root, *self-love*. And whosoever hopes for honour, praise, preferment, or profit from others, for any goods of nature, gifts of grace,

grace, or prerogatives of vertue, is falln into this snare of the Devil, robs God of his proper due, is rotten at the heart, and hath already received his full reward.

The remedy of all this (*O dear souls*), is unfeigned *humility*. Cast one glance of your souls eye upwards upon your Creators might and mercy; all your perfections come out of his treasury, and are lent you to be improved for his service, not to be proud of for your own satisfaction: And look down with your other eye upon your bottomless nothing; see there your own base indignity and brutish ingratitude, your great impurity and gross impiety, and be ashamed to desire any temporal esteem, who so truly deserve eternal damnation.

Which must be remedied by the practice of humility.

6. Other knots of the same snare, are all *those passions*, which have their residence in our *inferiour nature*; *love*, *hatred*, *joy*, *grief*, *hope*, *and fear*, with their severall attendants: these raise up broiles to disturb our inward tranquillity, to discompose our Reason, and interpose

To self-love, appertain also all the passions of our inferiour nature love, hatred, &c.

pose their earthly exhalations between our superiour will and the grace of God.

To which we must oppose *Peace of heart.*

Peace of heart is the secure refuge against all these peevish Passions: do but cast your whole care upon your Creator, and call away your inordinate affection from creatures, and what then can punish or perplex you? Remit, and refer all accidents, whether adverse or prosperous, sweet or sowre, good or bad, to Gods high power and holy providence; comfort your selves in his mercy, content your selves in his all-sufficiency, and quiet your selves in his love. Ah! how poor, how vain, how vile, how unregardable are the best of worldly blessings? how is it possible that things in themselves so contemptible can have the least entrance or admittance into a soul setled in Gods pure love and presence? O let the children of this world, who place their final felicity, in such fading fooleries, who have their souls buried in this earth, and swallowed up in sensuality; be solicitous to seek them,

Read the 4. ch. num. 3. of the conflict.

glut

glut and burst themselves in the enjoying of them, and be dejected to be deprived of them: but we, (O souls aspiring to perfection!) whose ayme is God, whose ayme is vertue, whose reward is heaven; what have we to do with these inferiour passions? Away with these Mammons! My *heart* is signed with the signe of Gods *love*, my *hatred* is only bent against sin and my self, my *joy* is in God my Saviour, my *grief* is that I am not all his, my *fear* is to offend him, and my *hope* is to enjoy him.

7. Lastly, all *adhering to our proper will* and judgment, appertains to this ambush of our enemy. This draws us off by degrees from doing our duty; diverts us from following divine motions, and superiours commands; daunts us from relying entirely on Gods providence, and fulfilling perfectly his holy pleasure: we dare not disobey this *master*, nor will we venture to destroy this *Idol of our hearts*; 'tis death to be crost'd in our conceits, or contradicted in our exercises, which

The adhering to our own wills, and preferring of our own judgments, are also points of self-love, Read the 5. ch. of the Conflict.

which we have chosen according to our private fancy, accustomed with self-complacency, and keep with unpardonable propriety.

Which must be cured by obedience, submission, and resignation.

Perfect *obedience* breaks through this snare, and a totall resignation to Gods good will & pleasure, is the secure refuge against this deceit. How can a soul be disquieted to receive or refuse, act or omit, that which she truly conceives to proceed both in substance and circumstance from the divine providence and permission? How can that person go astray who is perfectly obedient to God and his superiour; gives up himself wholly to the guidance of Gods holy Spirit, and the government of a discreet director; observes each beck of the divine call, (first examined and approved by them who are incharged with their souls); and waits upon the divine will, as the shadow on the body?

Note a triple obedience. 1. Of vow.

8. Where you are to take notice of a *triple obedience*: One is of *vow*: another of *conformity*: and a third of *union*. The *first* concerns all *religious people*, and imports an ex-

external, exact, and necessary performance of that which is commanded.

The *Second* concerns all *spiritual souls*, and consists in their inward promptitude and readiness to execute Gods will, (manifested by faith and their ghostly guide) purely for himself, and precisely for his own sake, without the least touch of proper interest, or self-seeking. 2. of Conformity.

The *Third* concerns all *perfect persons*, and consists in so entire a connexion of their wills, to the will of their Lord God, that they seem both one: hence it is that they embrace all that happens to themselves or others, good or bad, life or death, for time or eternity, as immediatly proceeding from his divine goodness and as the *very best* that could happen. Here the soul elevated (above it self, and all things) into God, and stedfastly fixed in divine contemplation, patiently expects, and obediently attends to what he speaks, wills, and acts within her, remaining ever ready, and really resigned to suffer outward 3. Of Union.

ward pains, or inward preſſures; to receive comforts, or endure croſſes; as the ſupream providence beſt knows, permits and pleaſes: being fully content with all, and faithfully conſtant in all.

The Second Ambuſh.

Immoderate affection to creatures.

This affection to creatures, diſtracts us from our Creator,

1. THis infects, diſtracts, diſquiets, and diverts our minds, from their pure and perfect tendance to our Creator. Ah! what have we (whoſe inheritance is heaven) to do with the poor and periſhable commodities of this world? yet our ſubtil enemy ſtrives to make us ſerious in ſearching after them, ſolicitous to keep them, and impatient to part with them.

Againſt

Against this, we must provide *true poverty of spirit*, which consists in a perfect denudation of our souls from all propriety of love to any corruptible creature whatsoever: we must use them only and not rest in them; we may enjoy them, but take no joy in them: if Superiours command them from us, we must cheerfully part with them; if any accident bereave us of them, we must willingly let go our hold, saying, *Our Lord gave them, our Lord hath retaken them, his name be ever praised, his will always performed: Farewel uncertain and unsatisfying profits: wellcome sweet and secure poverty!* We must throw away couragiously all such cloggs as retard our soul's flight to perfection: Away with superfluities: Oh! that we could live with the only love of our naked and *crucified Jesus!* That we could support our feeble Nature, without the supplies of any creatures! that so our souls disingaged from the depressing necessities of flesh and blood, might soar aloft, and sweetly repose in

Against which must provide poverty of spirit.

Read the 13. ch. of the Conflict.

in the bosom of divine love!

Affection to persons corrupts our judgements.

2. Nor is the overmuch *tenderness of affection to any person* whomsoever, under what pretext soever, any other thing than a meer ambush of our enemy; for it corrupts our purest actions, and vitiates our most pious intentions; it is the bane of Gods love, the poyson of our hearts, and the venome of our souls. For when humane favour and respect strive to oversway the love of God, and strike in for a part of that which is due to God only; we do, or leave undone, say or unsay, what we neither should nor would, but for their sakes: Our kindred corrupt our judgments, and courtesies blind our reasons; so that we neither discern their follies, nor correct their faults, but rather comply with their imperfections, and sometimes wink at their open wickednesses, for the continuance of our own content.

The remedy is to love all impartially in and for God.

3. O how far is this from that pure love, which obligeth us to affect all (without exception of persons), only in and for God, as

bearing

bearing his image as being truly vertuous, and as far forth as they are furtherers to our soules salvation and perfection? Fy upon all *friendships and affections*, which are attended with such dangers, accompanied with such distractions, and followed with such disquiets which busie our fancies, and bend our imaginations to things so unprofitable and impertinent, and so much impeding us, in our intended progresse to the perfection of Gods love.

4. So also *all disordered delight, pleasure and propriety in spiritual sweetnesses*, and inward solaces of devotion, are meer traps of the enemy, laid to catch and insnare our unwary souls, and to make them rest with complacency in things, which are not God himself (the end of our desires,) but only his creatures, guifts, and graces.

Spiritual sweetnesses may be somtimes snares of our enemy;

You must not stay here, (*O devout soul:*) but pass on your way, and transcend all for his sake whom you only seek, and not his solaces. These are helps and encouragements in your course, not the goal you must touch;

We must not stay in them, but transcend them.

touch; These are neither security nor sanctity, but only baits of the divine piety, to strengthen you in climbing the steep mountain to his perfect charity.

Read the 28. ch. of the Conflict.

The Third Ambush.

Extroversion, or an inordinate application of the soul to external things.

1. THis choaks up the Spirit of Devotion, quenches the souls ardor in her holy exercises, hinders her hastning to perfection, and buries the whole heart and mind, the whole time and talents in mean and inferiour employments, which should be totally taken up in divine contemplation.

Extroversion choaks up devotion,

Take heed of being drawn into this

this dangerous ambush (*O dear souls*,) intrude not your selves into any business: and when *Necessity*, *Obedience*, *or Charity*, (the only pretexts which can make extroversion lawfull and laudable), urge you abroad, keep your heart still at home, converse there with your Lord and love, and commune with him, concerning the more important affairs of eternity; abstract your selves from all outward multiplicity, and there treat sweetly, and secretly with him, of your souls union to that *one thing*, which is only and absolutly necessary.

Therefore we must not intrude our selves into employments;

2. Abridge therefore your fancy from fruitless roaming abroad upon all occurring objects, which proceeds from instability of heart, and argues a neglect of your interiour: Curb and suppresse all extravagations of your mind, not only from sinful, but from superfluous, and unprofitable conceptions; which nothing advance your soul in it's tendance to perfection, but contaminate it with the dust of vanity, and *contristate* the

But curb our fancies.

Read ch. 4 n. 6 of the Conflict.

the holy Spirit of God, within you.

Perform works of obedience, necessity, and charity, without engaging your affections;

3. Perform such works as concern your calling without solicitude of mind, or ingagement of affection: lest your senses become darkned, your soul distracted, your fervor diminished, your prayers neglected, and you sliding insensibly into negligence, and a total discomposition in your *inward man*, be hardly ever again reclaimed and recollected. For how can a soul which is totally environed with worldly impertinencies, have any vacant time left for the entertainments of piety? how can a mind, dull'd and astonish'd with the continual noyses of mundanity, hearken attentively to Gods holy inspirations?

And strive to get into your interiour.

4. Wherefore strive timely and diligently to get into your *interiour*: prevent your soul (which is ever active, never idle,) with pious thoughts, lest evil habits press in first and pre-possesse it: apply your selves speedily and seriously to *introversion, spiritual silence, and inward attendance* to God alone; adhere

to

to him only, and remain unremoveable from this maxim, *To desire nothing, demand nothing, think of nothing, love nothing, labour for nothing, but him alone, that One and All*, which is needfull for you: Do this as if nothing else concern'd you, and as if there were nothing but *He and your self*, and *You and himself*, considerable in the whole world.

5. The surest way to compass this happy and heavenly design, is to keep your eyes and heart fix'd constantly and continually upon *Christ crucified*. This is the solid ground whence the highest contemplatives take their first rise; hither (*into this sacred Ark* of our Saviours humanity), they must again return after their lofty soarings into the divinity; and here they must *settle, when elsewhere they can find no footing*: And surely a soul that seriously considers his sufferings, contemplates his mercys, and reflects upon his vertues; will find her whole time too short to visit each room of his seve-

By fixing our hearts upon Christ crucified.

tal perfections, and none at all left, to be loſt upon extravagant and worldly fancies.

The Fourth Ambuſh.

Bitterneſs of Heart.

Bitterneſs of heart comprehends all ſadnes, frowardneſſe, &c.

1. WHich comprehends all kind of *Sadneſs, Melancholy, frowardneſs, reſtleſneſs, indignation, deſpitefulneſs, proneſs to impatience, diſcontent, tediouſneſs of mind, averſion, diſtaſt of all things, diſlike of others, ſuſpicions, ſiniſter interpretations, unpleaſantneſs, murmurations, detractions, rancor, malice, raſh-judgments, and the like.*

All which proceed, either from nature, indiſcretion in

2. The ſource of theſe bitter ſtreams, is either *perverſe nature*; or *indiſcreet auſterities*; or an over-ſerious application of the mind

mind to *study* and thoughtfulness austerities, thoughtfulness, presumption, or immortification; or a secret *presumption* of self-perfection and sufficiency; or an immortification of *passions*; or a reflexion upon *past injuries*; or an *envying* at others *vertue*, praise, preferment and prosperity.

And all these anguishes of mind, and harshnesses in conversation, are great impediments in our progress to spirituality, and must necessarily be sweetned and season'd with the Sugar of perfect Charity: For if we truly love our Lord God, how can we scorn his image, stamp'd in the souls of our Brethren? Do they cease to be Gods amiable creatures, because they displease, despise or neglect me? may they not be Gods friends, though they are my foes? are they not more likely to love God, because they dislike me, who am so truly unworthy to be loved by any one? Are not my seeming enemies, (upon due consideration), my surest friends, since by mortifying me, they encrease my stock of merit, occasion my more serious application to the practice of vertue,

And must be sweetned with charity.

Read c. 16. of the Conflict.

and egg me onwards in the way of all perfection?

3. You muſt therefore buckle up your ſelves (*O dear Souls*) againſt all theſe bad and bitter diſpoſitions; by loving all, in, and for God; by being amiable, to all, affable to all, meek to all, merciſull to all: Strive to be gentle in words, cheerfull in countenance, pleaſing in your proceedings, patient in enduring, compaſſionate to others in their failings, charitable in aſſiſting them, ready to pardon them pious to interpret their actions for their beſt advantage, far from troubling or thwarting them, free from contriſtating or confounding them.

And by being amiable and affable to all.

4. There is alſo another privat and perilous corner in this ambuſh of bitterneſs of heart, which is, a certain *grudging at the proceedings of Gods providence*, and a repining at his permiſſion of adverſities to fall upon us.

To this ambuſh belongs a certain grudging at Gods proceedings, Which muſt be warily avoided,

Take heed (*dear ſouls*), of ſlipping into this ſad and diſmal gulf of diſcontent and murmura-

tion

tion against God, in the least thought, word, or gesture: be not dejected or disquieted at any thing, but say cordially, cheerfully, faithfully and resignedly: *It is the Lord, let him do what seems good in his own eyes. Alas! Can Self-love so blind my understanding, as to make me think I deserve not to suffer this and much more? I offer up my self to thy sweet pleasure, O my God; my heart is ready and prepared to perform what thou pleasest, and to endure what thou permittest; and I am wholly resigned to thy holy will, in all things which shall befall me, for time and eternity.*

By a cordial Resignation.

The Fifth Ambuſh.

Scrupuloſity.

WHich includes all *inward affliction, fearfulnes, perplexity, vexation and trouble of the ſoul*, and is an evident effect of ſome ſecret pride and ſelf-love,

Scrupuloſity ayms at the deſtruction of our Faith and Confidence.

1. This dangerous Ambuſh is deſigned by our enemie to cut off all ſuccours of *Faith* and *Confidence in Gods mercy* and goodneſs from us, that ſo by degrees he may lead us on, and caſt us headlong into the *precipice of deſpair*.

To avoid this, we muſt rely upon God and our guide.

2. To avoid this deceit, which ayms at your utter ruine and deſtruction, your only ſecure and ſhort way (*O dear ſouls*), is to caſt your ſelves really, reſignedly, cheerfully and

and confidently into the bosom of the divine bounty, and to the guidance of your ghostly Father: there is no other hope of shelter or safety from these storms of troubles and temptations. There you may make a happy exchange of your servile & slavish fear into sweet & filial love: there you will drown and destroy these dismal, dreadful and desperate Imaginations and fancies in the abysses of Gods infinite mercy: there you will admire, adore, and implore, his power, wisdom and goodness, whereby you will confess, yield, and confide, that he can, knows how, and is willing to help and heal your sick and sorrowfull souls in his own good time and liking: there you will truly see that you are nothing of your selves, but are all things, have all things, and *can do all things in him, your all-sufficient creator and comforter.*

3. And you may securely stand to this infallible verity; *That you can never err in overmuch trust, hope, and confidence in God*, and in his mercy and bounty; so long as you

We cannot err in Confidence, so long as we fal not into Negligence;

you ſlack not in the punctual performance of your duty; ceaſe not in the ſerious mortification of your paſſions and ſenſuality; continue your practices of patience in adverſity, of gratitude in proſperity, and of indifferency and reſignation to the divine will in all occurrences.

The Sixth Ambuſh.

Exceſsive and unneceſſary Study.

Which buſies the Underſtanding, but leaves the Wil barren, S. *Bernard. Serm. 36. ſuper Cantica.*

1. THis buſies the *underſtanding* about curious notions and uſeleſs ſpeculations, and leaves the *will* barren of all true devotion and affections: For there are *ſome* who *ſtudy* to know much, that they may become learned, and it is a fooliſh curioſity:

curiosity: *Some study* that they may sell their skill, and it is a foolish avarice: *Some strive to know* that they themselves may be known, and it is a foolish vanity: *Some study* knowledge, that with it they may edifie others, and that is charity: And finally *some desire knowledge*, that they themselves may be edified and their own souls better'd, and this is wisdom.

2. Wherefore all such study as aymes at the bare knowledge of things, without any further relation to piety, and proficiency in the way of the Spirit, is a meer trap of our enemy, thereby to puff us up with pride and vanity, to take up our time, and fill up our souls with self-conceits, and presumption: It makes a great noise, and furnisheth our tongues with fair expressions concerning the spiritual life, divine feelings, and the secret wayes of Gods proceedings with his faithfull friends and servants; but hath no true taste at all of that which it talks so much; 'tis an empty discourse, void of all inward experience, a meer

Puffs us up with vanity, but leaves us empty of true piety.

meer Hypocondriacall wind.

The remedy is to rectify our intentions.

3. The remedy against this, is, *to rectify our intentions*; Read not *dear Souls*, nor study, to be accounted learned, but to become perfect; desire rather to love Gods goodness, than to know much of his greatness; to lead a holy life, than to speak high words concerning it. Confesse your own ignorance in all things, and content your selves with the sole knowledge of your Saviour: This is the sum of all Science, and this alone will suffice for your Salvation.

Read the 1.2.3.cha. of the first Book of the Imita. of Christ, And the 43.ch. of the third Book.

The Seventh Ambush.

Tepidity, and coldnesse in devotion.

THis is the bane of all spirituality, nor hath the devil any more alluring bait, than this (seldom perceived and yet highly prejudiciall) *luke-warmness in devotion, want of vigour in our spiritual exercises, and defect of fervour in our tendance to perfection.* This is the bane of all spirituality. Read the 12. ch. of the Spir. Conflict.

1. Think not therefore (*dear souls*), that it sufficeth you to perform your accustomed practices of piety, but that you are continually to aym at a further and dayly encrease of charity: Consider, that *not to advance in the way of the Spirit, is to recoyle*; and that it is not We must alwayes go forward towards perfection.

not the multitude of your good works which makes them conſiderable, but the fervour wherewith they are performed: Be ſure to keep your heart and ſoul alwayes (as much as humane weakneſs and the rule of diſcretion will permit) elevated to your Lord and love: cry continually for his grace, knock inceſſantly at the gate of his mercy, ſigh after him perſeverantly, ſeek to perform his will diligently, and follow his pleaſure purely and perfectly; give that day for loſt wherin you have not made ſome progreſs in the way of perfection; and finally, rouſe up your ſelves, and prick forward your ſluggiſh dulneſs in devotion, with ſome brief and burning aſpirations, which you are to have alwayes ready in your heart and mouth: As

And ſigh after it perſeverantly,

Exciting our ſluggiſhneſs by frequent aſpirations.

O my Lord, ô my God, the life of my ſoul, and the only love of my heart! when ſhall I love thee, as I deſire and thou demandeſt?

O my Jeſu! when ſhall I die perfectly to the world, my ſelf, and all things, that I may live purely

and

and intirely in thy only charity.

O when shall I be nothing to any creature, and every creature nothing to me, but only in thee, and for thee alone?

O that I could go out of my self, and get into thee! That I could thrust my caitif heart out of this breast, to establish thine, (ô my sweet Saviour) in it's place!

O let thy true love transform me totally into thee! Let me not live any longer but in thee! Let me not love any creature, but by, in, and for thee, my Creatour!

O incomprehensible bounty! Either take my soul out of this world; or take the love of this world out of my soul! Either bereave me of my life, or bestow on me thy love, &c.

In all which raptures and affections, the holy Spirit is the best directour, whose inward impulse and dictamen, you are diligently to follow, (still according to discretion and obedience), with a perpetuall longing and loving, sighing and seeking to advance your soul to *divine Union.*

2. Finally,

2. Finally, I conclude with this hearty and heavenly counsell of S. *Anthony* to his disciples, against this dangerous coldness in devotion: *My brethren, Let this be my generall and particular precept unto you, the first and last lesson I teach you: Never to lose your first fervour and good purposes, nor to grow slack in your observances, but to go alwayes forward, and renew daily your devout exercises, as if you daily were new beginners in the way of perfection:* This he often repeated and inculcated, and being on his death-bed, that his last words might remain more lively imprinted in their mindes, he bequeathed unto them as his final and never to be forgotten testament, this piercing and pithy document, able to win, wound and melt a flint into fervour and compunction: *O my loving children, I go the way of my forefathers, our Lord calls and invites me, and my soul thirsts after him and heaven: But you, (ô my bowels)! what will you do? I have often admonish'd you, and do at this last gasp leave it*

An excellent document of S. *Anthony*.

you for my will and testament: Take heed you grow not tepide, and go backward, and so on a sodain lose the pains and profit of so many years past: Think still you are to begin anew, as though what you had already suffer'd for Christ, were nothing: Let your good will and desires get every day new strength and vigour; forget what is past, and run to what is before you; live and labour with such fervour and purity, as if it were your first work that ever pleased God, or the last service you should ever render him in this mortal life.

O devout souls! Our dayes pass away swiftly, death is alwayes at our heels, eternity approches, wherein our God, whom we have serv'd and lov'd, will wipe the tears off our eyes, the sweat off our brows, & the blood off our wounds, & crown us with glory, peace, security, & immortality: Let us not lose heart in his service, nor hope in his goodness! He expects and invites us: Angels and Saints offer their helping hands: The question is of eternal life, eternall light, eternal liberty, and eternall love.

THE



THE SECOND TREATISE OF THE SPIRITVALL *CONQUEST:*

Or,

The uſe and Practice of thoſe neceſſary weapons, which are preſcribed in the Treatiſe of the *Spiritual Conflict.*

Here Methodically managed, and drawn into ſeven Exerciſes, Affective Acts, or Aſpirations, according to the dayes of the Week.

Pſal. 118. v. 34.

Give me underſtanding, and I will ſearch thy Law, and I will keep it with my whole heart.

AT PARIS, M.DC.LI.

42.
1.7.
13



To the Devout Champions aſpiring to Perfection.

THat you may make the right uſe (O devout ſouls) *of theſe enſuing Exerciſes, you are firſt to be premoniſhed,*

That Aſpirations or jaculatorie prayers are ſhort and fervent acts, elevations, deſires, and requeſts of the Soul to God; *And they are of divers ſorts, and may be performed either in the heart only, or by the heart and mouth jointly.*

Firſt,

First, they may be practised by way of petition, begging love, vertue, perfection, devotion, &c. As, O Lord, give me light to know thy Will, grace to embrace it, and force to follow it. Help me to overcome my self, and my sworn enemies: Assist me to disgest difficulties, and disgraces for thy love. Pitty a poor sinner; Pardon a proud beggar; Receive a prodigall Child; Redeem a perishing soul; confirm my frailty, confound my Pride, comfort my Dull, Dark, and desolate Spirit. *And the like short, amorous, and pithy petitions.*

Secondly they may be expressed by way of wishing, and sighing after God, goodness, piety, perfection, &c.

As

As, O Lord, vvhen ſhall I knovv thee and my ſelf? When ſhall I truly love thee, and perfectly hate my ſelf? When ſhal I live in thee, and be dead to my ſelf?

Or thus, Oh, that I vvere truly vertuous, truly religious, truly mortified! Oh, that I vvere all thine! O my poor ſoul, take courage, hovv ſhall vve abound vvith delights, vvhen vve ſhall ſee our Maſter and Maker in his heavenly Kingdom!

Thirdly, they may be performed by way of expoſtulating, and complaining; ſometimes to God, other-times to our own ſouls; and then to all creatures:

As, Hovv long Lord? vvilt thou forget me for ever? Why hideſt thou thy face?

Why

Why art thou ſad my ſoul? O heavens, are you ſhut againſt me? &c.

Fourthly, by ſhorter expreſſions: as by Expreſsing the whole affection in few words, thus: Good God! Svveet Jeſu! Hovv long! O fire! burn! O one! O all! &c.

Theſe muſt differently be made uſe of accordiug to the various diſpoſition of the ſouls dryneſs or devotion. In all which you are not to binde your ſelves to any ſet form or ſorts of words, but only uſe ſuch as holy and fervent love ſhall ſuggeſt unto you.

And this manner of prayer (by fervent Aſpirations, frequent acts of love, and enflamed elevations of the ſoul) is (according to the divine doctrine of S. Denys) *the eaſi-*

eſt,

eſt, ſhorteſt, ſweeteſt, and perfecteſt means of uniting the ſoul to her laſt end, which is God, and conſequently of correſponding to our creation and calling.

This (ſaith he) is that admirable, holy and hidden Unitive vviſdom, *which without any foregoing meditation, or precedent ſearch into divine myſteries, draws up forthwith the lovers affection to his beloved Lord, which is more and more ſtretched, intended, and inlarged by theſe ardent ejaculations of the ſoul, thus familiarly conferring, communing, treating and talking with her Creator, and raiſing up her ſelf to him by acts of love, and deſires of conjunction.*

And we may fitly ſay that

the

the ſolid foundation of invvard perfection *is contained in ſuch acts, motions and tendances of our Souls towards God, their neighbours and themſelves; as the* outvvard *conſiſts in the practical performance of our duties, in relation to the ſame three objects.*

Make uſe therefore (O dear Souls), of theſe affective Devotions, daily, diligently and perſeverantly; and you ſhall ſoon perceive a happy and heavenly change in your ſouls; you ſhall feel your faith ſtrengthned, your devotion actuated; your good deſires prepared and put in real performances; your pious intentions ripened for executions; and your well-made purpoſes and reſolutions for-

warded

warded to leap into the punctual and particular observation of each part of your duty towards God, the world, and your selves.



The Seven Exercises.

The 1. Exercise, *For Monday.*
Of the Knowledge of God, and Confidence in him.

The 2. Exercise, *For Tuesday.*
Of the Knowledge, and Diffidence in our selves.

The 3. Exercise, *For Wednesday.*
Of obtaining Remission of our sins.

The 4. Exercise, *For Thursday.*
Of subduing Sensuality to Reason.

The 5. Exercise, *For Friday.*
Of Mortification, and perfect Abnegation.

The 6. Exercise, *For Saturday.*
Of Conformity to Christ Crucified.

The 7. Exercise, *For Sunday.*
Of perfect Union with God.

For

FOR MONDAY.

Of the Knowledge of God, and Confidence in him.

The First Exercise.

1. TO know thee, *O divine fountain of goodness*, is to be truly happy; and yet none can know thee, (*O boundless and bottomless Sea of all perfections*), but through thine own manifestation and mercy: Vouchsafe therefore, I beseech thee, (*ô most loving and liberal Lord*), to enter this poor & empty heart of thy meanest servant; to inform my

ignorant ſoul, with a glimpſe of this neceſſary ſcience, and to inflame my cold affection, with a ſmall ſpark of thy holy love.

O omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth, both which thou filleſt with thy greatneſs and glory: *O God* of infinite power, excellent wiſdom, unmeaſurable goodneſs, and incomprehenſible love! my ſoul thirſts after thee, the eſſential ſource of all felicity; my heart ſeeks thee, the proper place of it's repoſe; it ſighs to thee, the natural centre of all it's hope and happineſs. IN thy bleſſed mind, *ô my God*, it firſt reſted in it's eternall poſſibility and ſimilitude, thither it muſt again return, and there it muſt either reſt eternally or periſh for evermore: O let it now find thee, that it may ever love thee.

2. *O Lord*, moſt good, glorious, and gracious; moſt bleſſed and bountiful; moſt high and holy; moſt excellent and ineffable; What words or thoughts can expreſs thy purity and perfection? Let me *know* thee, O thou *life* of my ſoul!

Let

Let me *see* thee, O true *light* of my eyes! Let me *seek* thee, O thou only *solace* of my spirit! Let me *find* thee; O thou *desired* of my heart! Let me *embrace* thee, O my heavenly *Spouse*! Let me *possess* thee, O thou soveraign *sweetnes*, and full *satiety* of all my inward and outward senses. *O* that my heart could alwayes *think* on thee, my will ever *love* thee, my mind still *remember* thee, my understanding continually *conceive* thee; my reason perpetually *adhere* to thee, and my whole man incessantly *praise* thee! *O* hide not thy face from me, my joy, my light, and my life! If I may not see thee and live; O let me dy that I may see thee: I desire to dy here, and be dissolved, that I may see thee, know thee, come to thee, live with thee, and love thee eternally.

O ever blessed and glorious divinity! *O Father*, who of thine own substance, bringest forth an ineffable goodness, coequal, consubstantial and coeternal with thy self, which is thy Some: *O Father and Son*,

who loving each other with infinite charity and content, are united together in one *Holy Ghoſt*, equally and unſpeakably proceeding from you both! I admire thee, adore thee, and worſhip thee with all the powers of my body and ſoul.

3. *O ſacred Deity! O Tri-Unity, and Vni-Trinity!* O Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt! *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hoſts*, who wert, art, and ſhalt be for ever almighty; I thy poor creature, proſtrate before the Throne of thy Divine Majeſty, from the abyſs of my own nothing, invoke, adore and acknowledge thee, the abyſs of all perfection: I preſent thee with al thine own gifts, goods, and graces, which thou haſt plentifully powred out upon all thy creatures: I offer up to thy praiſe the affections of Angels and men, the properties of the elements, the beauty and motion of the whole univerſe, and the eſſence of all being: O that my ſoul were capable to compriſe unitedly all their ſeverall affections and perfections! how joyfully would it employ them in thy

thy praiſe? how ſweetly would it melt away in thy preſence? *Behold, O my God*, I make an intire oblation of them all, I acknowledge and adore thee with them all, and deſire to do it as frequently as I breathe, and as often as there are minutes in time, ſtars in the firmament, ſands in the Ocean, and numbers in all nature.

O my Lord, whoſe love is the life of my ſoul, increaſe my knowledge of thee, that I may enlarge my love to thee. *Alas!* I love thee not, *ô amiable Lord God*, becauſe I know thee not; I know thee not, becauſe darkneſs and ſin hath covered and incompaſſed my underſtanding: Wherefore, *ô bright light*, who illuminateſt all things, expell this *darkneſs* from my ſoul, drive off theſe clouds from my underſtanding, & draw the curtain from off the face of the abyſs of my mind, that I may ſee and know thee, and then I ſhall not chooſe but love thee.

O my dear Jeſu, ſhew me thy divine Father; dart a beam of thy

heavenly ſplendour into my dull heart, that I may have ſome degree of that holy ſcience which may help me in thy love, make me obedient to thy will, and reſolute in thy ſervice.

To know all things of this world, *ô Jeſu*, and not to know thee, is but ignorance and folly: let me therefore know thy eternal Father; and thee whom he ſent for my ſalvation, and it ſufficeth me. O give me this knowledge, that I may give thee my love, and I ask no more. Let me be unknowing, ignorant and a fool in all other things, ſo I may wiſely know thee only, *ô my God, and my all.*

4. *O King of glory*, I acknowledge thy perfections to be above all knowledge, but that of thy own divine underſtanding: I confeſs that thy height is unreachable, thy goodneſs unchangable, thy greatneſs incomprehenſible, thy light inacceſſible; And all other thy divine attributes and perfections are ſo mighty and ſo many, ſo good and ſo glorious, ſo excellent and ſo admirable,

mirable, so worthy and so wonderfull; that were all the power and prerogatives, all the vertue, wisdom, and qualities of all creatures united in one individual nature, it were not so much in respect of thy glory and greatness, as the least drop of water is, in comparison of the vast Ocean. Wherefore, I beg of thee, (*O immense and inaccessible Godhead*), only so much to know, conceive, believe and understand of thy hidden majesty, as may efficaciously move my will to thee; and I content my self with so much light of thy divinity, as may force me to love thee ardently, effectually, perseverantly.

O my Lord and my love! Fill my heart with the sweet influence of thy heavenly grace, that I may in some measure discover how good and gracious thou art to me, and to all thy creatures! O let me still remember thy *mercy*, ever dread thy *justice*, and continually admire and adore thy *power and providence*.

Ah! my noble Soul, stampt with thy Creators lovely image,

endowed with the excellencies of underſtanding to know him, of will to love him, of Memory to reſt in him; why adhereſt thou not faſt to him only in pure and perfect delight, forgetting and forgoing all ſenſible and worldly objects?

5. O that I were ſo raviſhed with thy love and liking (*my only amiable Lord God*) that through joy, jubily, and admiration, I might feel no *ſelf* at all, no ſenſe, no change, no inequality! That no proſperity might puff me up, no adverſity deject me, no accident ſeparate me from thee, *ô my God of infinite love and liberality!*

O that I could be ever *joyful* in thee, ever *gratefull* to thee, and ever *mindfull* of thy inhabiting preſence within me! Thou art alwayes nearer to my ſoul (*ô my good God*) than my ſoul is to my body, alwayes conſerving, counſelling, diſpoſing, directing, inciting and inſpiring it to thy love; and wilt thou not, (*ô my ſenſleſs and ſinful ſoul!*) be alwayes cautious and circumſpect how thou behaveſt thy ſelf in thy Lords

Lords presence, who is so tenderly carefull of thy safety? O let his love be no longer neglected, his sweet invitations no longer slighted: O that thou wouldst henceforth walk before him as befits his chast and holy Spouse, with all respect and reverence, fear and fidelity, courage and constancy! preparing thy self diligently for his divine embraces.

6. Grant I beseech thee, *ô mighty and mercifull Creator*, that my whole time and thoughts may be totally taken up in the contemplation of thy unmeasurable benefits and bounty towards me. For I know, *Lord*, that I am truly nothing, and yet thou carest for me (*ô my loving maker*), as if thou hadst no other creature in heaven or earth; thou deliverest me from innumerable dangers; adornest me with many gifts and graces; givest me leave at all times to have free access to thy throne of mercy, so that with one holy thought, one humble sigh, one devout desire, I may draw neer to thee, and enjoy thee, and in thee

all

all comfort and content: O divine privilege!

To diſcover to thee my wants, lay open my wounds, and boldly declare my wiſhes, as to my neereſt, deareſt, and truſtieſt friend and familiar, and to be ſure of ſupplies, ſalves, and ſuccour in all my neceſſities! O what goodneſs, what grace, what mercy is this?

O my ſoul! How loving and liberall a Lord have we? how loving in mercy, how liberal in bounty? Ah! our unthankfulneſs to requite, our unworthineſs to deſerve his favors!

Up *my heart*, be no longer ungratefull and unfaithfull to ſo great, good, and gracious a benefactour. Yes, *ô bleſſed and bountiful giver*, I now ſay cordially, and will ever ſtand to it couragiouſly; I will henceforth love thee, *ô my Lord*, my love, my life, my ſtrength, my ſupport my home my harbor, and my happineſs. I will remember thy ſweet words to all ſinners; Why will you periſh, *O children, As I live I deſire not the death of a ſinner, but*

but that he would turn to me and live. I will behold thy ſacred wounds ſuffered for me, able to move a rock to love and compaſſion: And though I am aſhamed to think what I have been, and how little I have done, how much thou haſt endured for me, how long thou haſt expected me, how lovingly thou haſt beſought me, and how poorly I have correſponded to thee; Yet I know, *ô my Lord*, thou ceaſeſt not to be God and good, though I am weak and wicked. Therefore I will take yet courage in thy ſervice, and confidently hope, that thou who ſought'ſt after me a loſt ſheep, wilt mercifully receive me now I ſeek after thee my loving ſhepheard with a right intention, real reſolution, and inflamed affection.

7. Yes, (*ô my Lord and my love*), heaven and earth ſhall ſooner periſh, than my confidence in thy ſweet mercies, and my Saviours merits. If thou repell me, I will run after thee;

If

If thou ſhut thy door againſt me, I will never leave knocking; *and if thou kill'ſt me, yet I will truſt in thee.* I wholly caſt my ſelf upon thy holy will, providence and protection. I proteſt with heart and mouth that I now am, and henceforth will be entirely thine; that I have nothing, ſeek nothing, fear nothing, deſire nothing, demand nothing, want nothing, will nothing, but thee onely, *My Lord, my Love, and my All.*

And I firmly purpoſe to ſerve and love thee (*ô ſacred and ſupream Majeſty*), ſimply, ſincerely, purely and perſeverantly, not for any fear of pains or puniſhment; not for any ſelf-intereſt of what this world can offer, or the next afford; not for the leaſt hope of heaven or happineſſe: but I will thee, ſeek thee, and love thee for thy ſelf only, (*ô my all-ſufficient Lord God*), who art the ſole object,

ſweet

sweet compleatment, and solid contentment of my soul. Pardon me, protect me, and provide for me; For thou art my only hope and happiness.



FOR TVESDAY.

Of the Knowledge, and diffidence in our ſelves.

The Second Exerciſe.

1. WHat is man, (*ô Omnipotent Creator*) what is this man, that thou ſhouldſt be mindfull of him? He is nothing *ô Lord*, and I am the leaſt and worſt of thoſe nothings. becauſe I have leaſt correſponded to thy grace, and made worſt uſe of thy gifts. O give me *light*; reach forth thy hand to this *blind creature crying after thee, O thou true light of the world, and life of my ſoul*! that now at length I may duly, diligently, cordially and abyſſally

abyſſally dive into my own baſenes, weakneſs, miſery, nothing: that knowing what I truly am, I may really loathe, hate, diſtruſt, deſpiſe, and deny my ſelf, and all my own proceedings; ſincerely love thee, only truſt and hope in thee, and rely wholly upon thy divine providence and protection.

I am not only content (*ô my Lord God*) but even willing and deſirous, that all thy creatures ſhould take me and treat me, according to my true condition and unworthyneſſe; And I am reſolved by thy grace to *humble my ſelf*, not only *under thy mighty hand*, but alſo under all their feet, as their ſervant and ſlave, to be troden on, abhorred, avoided, and deteſted by them all, as a ſink of ſin and filthineſs.

I will be deſirous to be eſteemed and uſed as droſs among metalls, chaff among grain, a Wolf among Sheep, and as *Satan amongſt the children of God*.

I acknowledge my ſelf unworthy of all grace and comfort from God

God or man, and worthy of all pain, puniſhment, croſſes, contradiction, confuſion, deſolation, death, damnation. I will be henceforth aſhamed to complain of any aggrievances, and be content to ſuffer whatſoever the world, the devil, and hell it ſelf, can inflict upon me.

2. And to ſtrengthen this my reſolution, I will rationally conſider before thee, *ô my Lord*, what I really am? what I was? and what will become of me? both touching my body, my ſoul, and my whole being?

Ay me! I have a body all clay, a ſoul all ſin, a life all frailty, *and a ſubſtance all nothing*. And this is all I have to vaunt of in thy preſence, *ô my Lord and my maker!*

My material part, is but *ſlime of the earth*, the very worſt part of the unworthyeſt element. Ah poor man! and canſt thou look ſo big who cam'ſt from ſo baſe an extraction? be aſhamed to lift up thy head, vile mud and dirt, ſince thy pedigree is ſo well known, and the in-

ingredients of thy being are so mean and contemptible.

And when I consider what this my body was in the womb, how it was conceived in concupiscence, nouriſhed with filthineſs, and brought up in darkneſs; I am aſhamed to own my own beginning, which is ſo horrid and lotheſome: and who then can juſtly boaſt of ſtate, ſtrength, beauty, or nobility, ſince the ground-work of all is but a little dung and corruption?

Ah poor worm! what a diſmal priſon wert thou detained in, for nine months ſpace of thy time? what naſty and poyſonous food was thy diet? how wretched was thy birth? how weak and wofull thy infancy? and what art thou in thy beſt and moſt flouriſhing condition in the world, but a clog and cage to thy inthrall'd ſoul; a painted ſack, or pargetted ſepulcher, full of filth, froth, and ordure? *O my Lord*, give me grace to frame an impartial judgement of what I am, and then how ſoon ſhall I check all riſings of pride and preſumption?

3. I

3. I came into this world (*O my Lord*), with groanes and tears, I live in it with griefs and cares, I ſhall go out of it with pangs and fears, and laſtly I muſt become a horror to the eyes of my deareſt friends, a prey of vermin, and a companion of rottenneſs. Ah! how canſt thou be proud of thy perfections, *poor clay and aſhes*? why ſhouldeſt thou look to be ſo highly priz'd, & ſo daintily pampered, *thou ſtinking puddle*? *Duſt thou art, & to duſt thou muſt return.* Haſt thou not alwayes before thy eyes theſe aſhes for thy glaſs, and death for thy miſtreſs, why then doſt thou ſuffer ſo many ſparkles of vanity to ariſe from this thy caitiff condition?

And thou, *my poor ſoul*, the ſpiritual part of my compoſition; O what ſhall I ſay of thee to thy great Lord and maker? What thou *haſt hitherto been*, I wel know; wretched, wicked, ſinful. What thou *now art* I know not; being uncertain of Gods grace and love. What thou *ſhalt be hereafter*, I am altogether ignorant; becauſe doubtfull of thy cor-

correspondency with grace, and fearful of thy perseverance in goodness.

Ah sad condition! I came (*ô my Lord*), into this world in originall sin, I am bred up in actual sin, and if death and deadly sin meet together, I shall feel the smart of them both eternally: O how much need have I then of thy grace (*ô merciful Lord God*) to avoid sin, since I cannot eschew death! O let me rather admit a deadly wound, than commit a deadly sin!

4. What art thou then, *ô my whole man*, consisting of body and soul? What wert thou, (*ô N.*) from all eternity, before thy conception in the womb, and birth into the world? Nothing. Ah poor nothing! what is less than nothing? where dwels this nothing? who can describe a nothing? which more differs from the least atome in the Sun, than Gods infinit greatness from the least of his creatures. *O proud nothing!* What hast thou, that thou hast not received? Nothing. Why then art thou puffed up

up with it, as if thou hadſt not received it? I acknowledge my whole being, to be from thy only bounty, (*O my great, good, and glorious maker*): and ſince I poſſeſs nothing, but what I have from thee, ſince I ſhall alſo neceſſarily fade away into my firſt nothing, if thou withdraw from me thy conſerving hand but a moment; I will no longer glory in that which is none of mine, but I will here lay the *foundation of my ſpiritual edifice*, upon this ſure and ſolid ground *of thy All, and my own Nothing*. I will endeavour to frame a true conceit of my own miſery, frailty, inſufficiency and nothing, that ſo I may fully, ſpeedily, and ſolidly come to this deſired *ſelf-knowledge* and humility.

I will run over my leſſon, repeat my queſtions, learn my anſwers, and ſtrive to grow skilful in this neceſſary and ſacred ſcience.

What have I received that I have not abuſed? Nothing: Body, ſoul, will, judgement, memory, underſtanding, affection, ſenſes, meat, drink,

drink, company, habit, books, prayer, Sacraments, all creatures.

Can I then be proud of Sin, Filthineſs, rottenneſs, labour, grief, infirmity, blindneſs, obſtinacy corruption, death and damnation, which are worſe than nothing?

Shall I boaſt of thy gifts (*O my God*), which are not mine; or of my own abuſes and ingratitudes? The one is to rob thee of thy honor, the other is to be honoured for thy diſhonour.

5. What creature ever ſinned ſo grievouſly as I have done, and yet ſorrowed ſo little, and ſuffered leſs?

Who ever forſook ſo great and good a God, for ſo little and vain a toy as I have done?

What ſinful ſoul is there now in hell, that would not have been a glorious Saint in heaven, if it had the helps, favours, feelings, and viſits, which I have both had and abuſed?

Who ever received ſo many mercies, ſo ſweet comforts, and ſo great graces from thee, *O bountifull Lord God,*

God, and made ſo little and bad uſe of them as I have done?

If I deny all this, my conſcience witneſſeth againſt me: If I confeſs it, oh! why am I not more humble?

Finally, If ſuch great troubles, temptations and tribulations had hapened to me, as have done to others, I ſhould by conſenting have ere now burned in hell fire; but thou, (*O meek and merciful Creator*), haſt ſpared me, becauſe thou knoweſt my weakneſs, and ſent me ſmall croſſes, becauſe I cannot bear greater, &c.

Wherefore, *Not unto me*, (*O Lord*), *but to thee, be all honour* for time and eternity!

O that I could know thee, and know my ſelf! O that I could truly ſee my own nothing, and totall dependancy on thee! my miſery and malice, and thy perfection and total goodneſs.

Ay me! weak and wretched N! What are my forces that I ſhould rely on them? I have nothing. O *my Lord*, but what is thine, my me-

rits

rits are thy mercies, my goods thy graces; yet I neither have been thankfull for receiving them, nor faithfull in using them.

O! when did I trust in my own strength and was not foiled, and confounded? Grant therefore, (*O my Lord, ô my only hope, and help; O my sole safety and security*) that I may totally *trust* to thee, and *distrust* my self; truly *acknowledge* thee, and *deny* my self; entirely *love* thee, and *hate* my self.

6. I confess (*ô my Lord*) that I am the poorest, ungratefullest, unprofitablest, and unworthyest worm of the earth; a thing altogether useless to the world, and only active to offend thee, and to do wickedly in thy sight: and is it possible that I can harbor any thought of *self-love*, or self-l king?

O God of infinite glory, greatness, and majesty, before whom *the powers of heaven do tremble!* what are all creatures in thy sight? and what am I the meanest of them all? O what proportion is there (*great God*) between me and thee? between

thy All and *my Nothing*? And yet have I infring'd thy laws, disobey'd thy commands, contemned thy Counsels, resisted thy callings, and contradicted thy will to prefer my own! O monstrous impiety and ingratitude! And shall I not willingly submit to all pain, punishment, contradiction, and contempt, which thou (*ô my highly offended creatour,*) shalt suffer thy creatures to inflict upon me? Behold, *O my Lord*, I debase, humble and annihilate my self under all things that have a being: I will henceforth utterly hate, distrust, and detest my self and wholly love thee, and relie upon thy mercy.

O holy *self-knowledge*, O sacred *humility*! thou art the key of all perfection, the door of all solid vertue, piety and devotion.

7. I now cleerly see, by the light of thy divine goodness (*O gracious Lord God*), what hath hitherto been the cause of my *non-proficiency* in the way of the Spirit; and why the path of vertue seemed

and

so unpleasant, thornie, tedious and troublesome to my deceived soul: It was because I had not learned to leave, loath, deny, and distrust my self; and to rely wholly on thee, O my *only comfort and support!*

I will therefore henceforth faithfully practise what I perceive so necessary: I will profoundly humble my soul; both *inwardly* in thy presence (*O my Lord*), and *outwardly* to the whole world.

I will joyfully and voluntarily embrace all injury, indignity, contempt, correction and confusion which can befall me, with as much pleasure as I have formerly any cherishings and kindness.

I will utterly destroy, ruine, and root out all *self-love*, self-liking, self-seeking, self-praise, and self-complacencie.

I will cast my self under the feet of the vilest creatures, take pleasure in the meanest employments, and obey them most wil-

lingly, whom my nature moſt diſtaſts and diſlikes.

I will walk before thee, (*O my Creator*,) as thy needy, naked, deſolate and deſtitute vaſſal; acknowledging my ſelf void of all vertue, and attributing to my ſelf nothing but ſin, ingratitude, deſects, failings, imperfections.

I will fully perſwade my ſelf that no one can contemn, confound, perſecute and puniſh me as I deſerve.

I will not regard whether I am honored or hated, but imagine my ſelf as a thing dead & forgotten: or as that which never had a being, and is now truly nothing.

I will be contented to be accounted an hypocrite in my ſincereſt actions; and to be thought full of inward impatience ſecret grudgings, and deſires of revenge againſt them who ſhall any way mortify or miſuſe me, though my heart be never ſo free from it.

Finally, I will have theſe and the like

like thoughts and words alwayes in my heart and mouth: *I am nothing, I have nothing, I do no good, I am an unprofitable ſervant, I utterly hate and diſtruſt my ſelf, and totally rely upon thee, O my Lord, my love, and my All.*



FOR WEDNESDAY.

To obtain Remiſsion of our Sins.

The Third Exerciſe.

1. *WHo will give water to my head, and fountains of tears to my eyes? And I will weep day and night* for my ſins, which *cover me all over like an incurable ulcer*, from the ſoal of the foot to the crown of the head.

Where art thou, O my wretched and wicked ſoul? In what labyrinths doſt thou walk? In what ſinks of ſin, and puddles of uncleaneſs doſt thou wallow?

Awake,

Awake, arise, lament, repent: how long wilt thou sleep? why wilt thou dy? when wilt thou shake off thy fetters? Ah, return silly *sheep* to thy *good Pastour*, return *poor prodigal* to thy *pious Father*, whose goodness so lovingly invites thee, whose mercy hath so long expected thee.

O great and glorious God, the mighty Monarch of heaven and earth, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, behold a poor and penitent Publican (who is ashamed to lift up his eyes to heaven, and unworthy to take thy sacred name into his sinfull mouth) humbly knocking at thy gate of mercy, clipping thy holy feet, and craving thy accustomed pity and compassion.

O merciful Lord, hide not thy self from me, shut not the door against me. Oh! one crum of comfort, one dram of devotion to my sad and sick soul, to my dry and desolate spirit.

2. I am conscious of my ingratitude against thee, (*O supream majesty*) *and my sin is always before me*,

and confounding me: But whither ſhould I retire my ſelf from thee? To whom ſhould I have recourſe but unto thee?

Art not thou my *Father*, my *Father of mercies*, which have neither limits nor meaſure? Art not thou my *Maker*, *my preſerver*, *my governor*, *my deliverer*, *my King*, *my Paſtor*, *my Phyſician*, *my Prieſt*, *and my Sacrifice*?

If thou art not all this and more to me; and if I am nothing to thee; refuſe me, reject me, and relinquiſh me a prey to be ſwallowed up by thy enemies.

But it is time, (*O my Lord*) that heaven and earth take notice of what thou art to me, and what I am to thee. It is time thou enter into thy right: And I muſt now either give my ſelf to thee, or thou muſt take me unto thee.

Not that I aſpire to thoſe excellent prerogatives of thy deareſt ſervants: No, my Lord, it ſufficeth me to be in the out-rank of thy meaneſt ſlaves; to be only ſtamp'd with thy mark, and link'd faſt in thy chains,

chains, that I may never more have the power to fly from thee. O grant me this favour (*moſt merciful Father*) wch thy dear Son hath purchaſed for me, by the price of his death and paſſion.

I am fall'n without thee by my own frailty, but can never hope to riſe, but by thy mercy, *O my Lord and only ſupport*! I am ſick without thee, but cannot be cured without thee, *my heavenly Phyſician*: I am dead without thee, but can never be revived but by thee, *ô life of my ſoul*! So true it is that to make me come to thee, thou (*ô moſt gracious Lord God*), muſt firſt come to me.

O the admirable goodneſs of my loving Lord! Even this little I am doing, is rather thine own work than mine: Thou *O my Lord*, putteſt repentance into my ſoul, deſires into my heart, ſighs into my breſt, confeſſion into my mouth, prayers into my lips, remorſe into my memory, reſolutions of amendment into my will: Tis Thou (*O gracious God*), who chiefly acteſt all this good in me, by me, and for me.

O my All! do then *all* in me that thou desirest: And particularly overwhelm (*I beseech thee*) my whole interiour with perfect contrition; not coming from a slavish and servile fear, but from a faithful and filial love: Grant me a true and intire grief for having offended thee, not because of thy promises or threats; but because thou art in thy self, good, amiable, adorable.

3. Or if mercenary interest do yet more move thee, (*O my sensual and sinful soul!* For how hainously dost thou take a small injury, how deeply dost thou resent a little disgrace, the loss of a dear friend, of health, of honour, or the like temporall and perishable commodities)? O whence is it then, that thou so little apprehendest thy loss of grace, and thy eminent and imminent danger of eternall damnation?

Is it a small matter to be Gods enemy? To lose the good will of all heaven? To destroy Gods image? To cut up life, root and branch?

To

To side with the accursed devils, (thy Creators sworn enemies)? to hatch Treason, & enter Conspiracie with the damned? Yea and to kill (as much as in thee lyes) him, who by his own death gave thee life? O brutall and unnatural ingratitude!

Surely the *annihilating of heaven*, earth, Angels, men, and all Nature, cannot be compar'd with this malicious evil and willfull destruction of thy grace *O Lord*, in my soul. O eternal God! what a monster have I then been in grace, what a prodigie in nature, who have so little car'd to commit such enormous sins?

The reason is: Because the least degree of a higher order, surpasses the higheſt degree of the lower order.

But (*O my Lord*) I will even now change my life; I here detest all sin, I make firm purpose of amendment, I have a ful confidence in thee my Creator, a good wil to do satisfaction, and a totall resignation to thy divine pleasure.

4. I am the woful criminal, (*O just judge of my soul*), and I will be also the accuser and witnes, the advocate and executioner in this tribunal.

I ſummon you therefore, O deteſtable pride, O abominable envy, O execrable avarice, O beaſtly lubricity, and all you accurſed crew of ſins: how long will you reign on earth? how long will you diſpeople Gods inheritance? who brought you in amongſt Gods children?

Tis the perverted Will of man (*O dread Soveraign*) which hath done all theſe miſchiefs. Rectify (*ô my Lord*, I beſeech thee) this my crooked Will, and murder theſe horrible monſters in me, and grant that I may henceforth rather expoſe my body to a thouſand deaths, than my ſoul to one deadly ſin.

Thy Saints will rejoyce (*ô God*) at my amendment, and thy Angels will make a Feaſt, but thy own reſentment of joy will be infinite, becauſe thy love is infinite, which goes hand in hand with thy eſſence, and comprehends all love in ſupream eminency.

I will therefore expect from thee, *O heavenly Father*, the exact remembrance; from thee, *my Redeemer* the

the perfect knowledge; from thee, *ô holy Spirit*, a true repentance and from thee, *ô Sacred Trinity*, an intire absolution and plenary indulgence from all my iniquities.

The grief I feel for my past offences; the hatred I have against each sin at this present; and the resolution I make to avoid all iniquity for the future, are not equivalent in me to their enormity and hainousness: I therefore humbly crave (*ô holy Lord God!*) that thou wilt accept thine own hatred against sin, for that which I should and would have; and in stead of the sorrow I want, I offer that of thy Son, my sweet Redeemer, with the Sacrifice of his immaculate life and innocent death.

And since I cannot be impeccable by nature (*O my Lord*), nor dare presume to ask to be so by grace; give me leave to prostrate my self before thy infinite bounty and clemency, and beg (by the merits of *Jesus Christ*, thy dear Son, and by the desires of thy essential love, the blessed holy Ghost), that though I may

may not be impeccable, yet I may never ſin more; and if I muſt ſometimes ſin through my frailty, yet that I may never ſin mortally.

This thou deſireſt, O *Lord*, this thou demandeſt, this thou commandeſt; O give me what thou commandeſt, and command me what thou pleaſeſt.

5. O *my good Lord Jeſu*, who art Lord of my life, and ſhouldſt be the love of my ſoul (had I not like an ungracious and ungratefull wretch given my heart, and ſold my affection, to fond, frail, filthy and fading creatures and comforts, which are ſo far from bringing me eyther quiet of mind, peace of conſcience, purity of ſoul, or perfection of ſpirit; that they leave me nothing but trouble, confuſion and remorſe, with a world of diſquiet and deſperate thoughts, violent paſſions, and vitious inclinations), I find no other refuge, or remedy but to return to thee *my Centre*; to convert my ſelf to thee, *O my good Lord and Maſter*; to caſt my ſelf

in

in all humility at thy sacred feet; and heartily to beg thy mercy, pardon and reconciliation.

O *mercifull Father*, I truly acknowledge my prodigality, and humbly confess my treachery; and am sorry from my heart, that ever I offended thee, who deservest so much love and service from me:

Beseeching thee as a guilty prisoner, to be pitifull to thy poor creature, and mercifully to forgive me the manifold rebellions and grievous iniquities that I have committed against thy Divine Majesty and goodness; and for the love of thee, I freely forgive all them who have any way offended or contristated me, sincerely acknowledging that I deserve no comfort from any creature, but all contempt and confusion; and not only to be troubled by all on earth temporally, but even to be tormented by the Devils in hell eternally.

6. O how ungratefull a child have I been to offend so often and so

ſo grievouſly, ſo loving and liberal a Father ſo meek and merciful a Redeemer, and ſo ſweet and ſoveraign a Majeſty, who hath always ſhew'd himſelf ſo benigne and bountifull to me, tolerating me in my ſins; and expecting me to his mercy! wooing me to his love, and calling me to his ſervice by a thouſand means, all which I have either rejected or neglected; and ſtill nevertheleſs given me time and opportunity to do penance?

O my poor ſoul! how blind and bewitched haſt thou been, to leave the bread of Angels, and to feed on the husks of ſwine; for vanities, villanies, ſhadows, and nothings, to abandon God and all goodneſs on whom depends all thy hope and happineſs, quiet and comfort for time and eternity?

O blindneſs! O folly! O frenzie!

Would God I had never ſinned! Oh that I might never ſin more! O my God, what have I done? Would I had

I had suffered on the Cross, pains of body, and pangs of soul, when I thus N. sinned!

Oh what can I say or do more? I abhor and detest whatsoever I have done, said, thought or desired contrary to thy holy will (*O my Lord and my love!*) I renounce all company and occasions which may induce me to offend thee.

7. I cast my self at thy sacred feet, to be thy slave for ever, with a firm resolution to bear thy *Cross* till death, and to do penance and satisfaction for my past pride and pleasure, desiring nothing but to live at thy feet, like the penitent *Magdalen*, in solitude, silence, submission.

O good Jesu! Out of thy infinit mercy, merits, and meekness, suffer not me, thy poor creature, to be damned and separated from thee eternally! *O amiable eternity! O eternall amitie of God!* Shall I leave and lose thee, for filthy pleasures, frail

creatures,

creatures, fond friendſhips, fading honours?

No, *dear Lord*, No: Let it pleaſe thee rather to take my ſoul out of my body, than thy love out of my ſoul: let me rather dy miſerably, then ſin mortally.

Let me paſs on the reſt of my pilgrimage in thy grace and fear, that I may end my dayes in thy friendſhip and favour; which I beſeech thee to grant me (*O moſt powerfull and mercifull Savior*), by the love of thy ſweet heart, by the merits of thy bitter death and paſſion, by the interceſſion of thy bleſſed Mother, and by the ſuffrages of all holy, happy, and devout ſouls.

Upon all which relying, as upon ſo many ſure anchors of my hope, I commit and reſigne my ſelf to thy diſpoſition and providence, for time and eternity, (*O my Lord, my love, and my All,*) fully truſting that thou wilt mercifully pardon my ſins, carefully

fully aſſiſt me in my wants and weakneſſes and in the end happily bring me to eternall bliſs, by ſuch means as thy divine wiſdom knows moſt convenient for me.



FOR

FOR THVRSDAY.

Of Subduing Senſuality to Reaſon.

The Fourth Exerciſe.

1. MY *Spirit is willing* (*O moſt glorious and gracious Lord God*), to ſerve thee, love thee, honour thee, and follow thee; *but my fleſh is weak*, frail and refractory. *I do not what I deſire* (*O my God*), and what thou demandeſt; *but I act that which I hate*, and what thou forbiddeſt.

I feel, O my Lord, a law of ſenſuality, *contradicting the law of my mind, captivating my reaſon*, clouding my judgement, and continually

nually striving to cast me down headlong into sin and perdition.

Unhappy man that I am! Who will free me from this body of death? Ah! my brutish body! ah! my burdensom flesh! Thou art my dangerous and deadly enemy. 'Tis thy weight that depresseth my soul; thy earth that clogs and corrupts my ayr; thy contagion and perversity, which infects and debaseth my better part and heavenly portion; thy sensuality, which draws on, endangers, and almost destroys my reason.

2. Ah Sensuality! the source of all my misery! how justly do I now hate thee? and how willingly would I leave thee?

At my first acquaintance with thee, thou defiledst me with original sin: In my infancy thou mad'st a beast of me; And now in my riper years, thou still pursuest me, proclaimest open war with me, blindest my Understanding with darknes ignorance and errours, mak'st my Will refractory to good, and ready to all evil, distractest my Memory

with vain and vile fancies, and perpetually toſſeſt me to and fro between love and hatred, joy and grief hope and fear, and the reſt of thy numerous and enormous, iraſcible and concupiſcible powers and paſſions.

Ay me! how ſad is my ſtate? how deplorable my condition? Oh! how long (*Lord*) muſt I dwel with theſe devils? how long muſt I endure the violence of theſe paſſions?

O my Lord, my ſtrength, and my ſalvation, break theſe fetters for me! Command a calm? (*O thou only Ruler of Sea and winds*) and appeaſe the ſurges of theſe my unmortified appetites: Oh! reſtore me to my ſelf again, reduce reaſon to her loſt dominion in my ſoul, and bring back me thy poor creature, to thee, my powerfull Creator. O let not this paſſenger periſh amidſt theſe boyſterous billows, nor ſuffer utter ſhipwarck in theſe fearfull tempeſts.

I ſuffer violence (*O my Lord*) anſwer for me: *the companion which thou haſt given me hath deceived me:*

me. Sense hath corrupted and conquered my Judgment. Oh! how I am dragg'd up and down by my al-mastering appetites! commanded by my servants, and fettered by my slaves: O tyranny! O indignity!

Ah my soul! O noble spirit, fair as the angels formed to thy Creators lovely resemblance, stampt with his divine character, and heir apparent to his glorious kingdom! To be thus subject to the base and brutal desires of flesh and blood? O intollerable bondage! O unworthy servitude.

3. O Father of mercies, and only Physician of my soul! Thou art almighty, and al-mercy; and I am all weakness, and all misery: There is no part left sincere in my whole body and soul, from the contagious poyson of passion, from the infectious leprosy of sin and sensuality.

All is out of order, (*O my Lord*) I acknowledge it to my own shame and confusion; each sense is gone astray, each member of my body is cor-

corrupted, each power of my ſoul is perverted.

My Underſtanding is obſcured with *ſelf-love*, my Memory diſtracted with *ſenſual objects*, my Will poſſes'd with *peevish inclinations*: My affections are vain my paſſions violent, my diſpoſitions vitious: My body is burdenſome, my imagination troubleſome, my life irkſome.

Theſe are my wounds (*O my heavenly Surgeon*). O put to thy helping hand I beſeech thee; ſee, ſear, and ſearch them before the gangren enter, and the grief grow incurable! My *ſoul is ſick even to death*; *if thou wilt*, O my Lord, *thou canſt both cleanſe* and cure me.

To this end thou deſcendedſt from *Jeruſalem* to *Jerico*, (*O pious Samaritan*), from heaven to earth (*O compaſſionate Saviour*), where thou findeſt me in this pitifull plight ſore, beaten, wounded, half dead, and utterly deſpoiled of all natural and ſpiritual riches, by theeves and robbers, which are the ſenſes of my body,

body, and the faculties of my soul: O pass not by me (*sweet Jesu*) but mercifully bind up my bleeding wounds with the swathing bands of thy death and passion; powre upon them the wine of thy pretious blood; and supple them with the oyl of thy heavenly grace.

4. I intend, *â my Lord*, (strengthen me in this hour), I intend, *O sweet Saviour*, a total reformation of life and manners; an intire mortification of my corporeal senses, and spiritual faculties; an absolute change in my whole man.

O grant me (*I beseech thee my loving Lord*) the powerful assistance of thy special grace, for the performance of this great and good purpose.

Teach me now (*â my blessed Master*), to live inwardly, piously, spiritually; as I lov'd formerly to live outwardly, vainly, sensually.

O let me henceforth yield to thy divine motion, obey thy call, imitate thy example, and follow thy will.

O let me never more act or omit

any thing, (be it never ſo little), for my own liking, but purely and perfectly for thy love.

5. Grant (*ô good Jeſu*) that at each word of my mouth, at each glance of my eye, at each morſell I eat, at each member I move, and at each inward and outward action I undertake, I may firſt ask thy leave and permiſſion, and ſo do it or leave it accordingly, as thy holy inſpiration anſwers and allows me.

O that I could perform each naturall and neceſſary work with an actual reflexion upon thy praiſe and pleaſure, and with a pure intention to be united to thee, my Lord and my love.

Thy outward ſenſes, (*ô my ſweet Saviour*) were exactly ſubject to thy reaſon, and perfectly obedient to thy ſacred ſoul: O let mine be ſwallowed up, I beſeech thee, (*gracious Jeſu*) and ſanctified by the merits of thine. Let me live, love, move, and make uſe of my ſenſes, purely and only, in thee, for thee, and by thee.

Thy ſacred hands (*ô holy Jeſu*) were

were harſhly nailed to the tree of the Croſs ; preſerve mine I beſeech thee from all ſinfull touching.

Thy bleſſed feet were likewiſe pierced and faſtned to the ſame rood : O fix my ſteps, that I run not to evil actions, direct them in thy paths, and make me ſpeedy in all works concerning thy honour, and the aſſiſtance of my neighbour.

Thy holy mouth was free from guile, full of wiſdom : put thy words (*ſweet Jeſu*) into mine, let it alwayes ſpeak of thy love, and only ſing thy prayſes.

Thy divine ears were filled with blaſphemies and deriſions : Let not mine be open to hear vanities and detractions.

Thy ſweet eyes, poured out floods of tears for me : O give unto mine, tears of compaſſion for thy ſufferings, and of compunction for my own ſins.

Thy taſte was tormented with the noyſome potion of gall and vineger : O take from me, I beſeech thee, all deſire of delicacies ; let me not eat or drink but for meer

ſuſtenance and neceſſity.

Thy whole humanity (*ô gracious Jeſu,*) was martyred and murthered: O grant that I may be truly and totally mortified; Let me not ſee, feel, hear, taſt, ſmell, eat, drink, do any thing, or make uſe of any thing, as following my own guſt, ſenſuality, and ſelf-ſeeking; but in pure conformity to thy divine will and pleaſure.

6. O *mercifull Redeemer*! how great and grievous were the inward ſufferings of thy holy ſoul? O for thoſe thy ſorrows, and thy tender mercies ſake, cleanſe, cure, inlighten, inform, reform, and transform all my inward man.

O permit not my *Vnderſtanding*, where the knowledge of thy greatneſs and goodneſs ſhould be only ſeated to be overſpread with ignorance and errour.

Let not my *Memory*, which ſhould be totally taken up with thee, be ſtuffed with vain fancies or impertinent curioſities.

Let not my *Will*, which thou gav'ſt me to deſire and love thee,

(*O my only Lord and love*), above all thy creatures, be inslav'd to any inferiour affection.

Repair, (*ô gracious Redeemer*) this lively image of the lovely Trinity; which is almost defac'd by my brutish sensuality. Grant, (O *dear Saviour*), that my Understanding, Will and Memory, may be incessantly busied in knowing, loving, and remembring thee, and that they may forget and forgo all other objects, but only in thee and for thee.

7. O that my *heart* were perfectly disingaged from the love of all creatures! Drain it (*sweet Jesu*) and deliver it from all forreign and domestick *affection*; and fill it up again with *thine* only, that it may never love, desire, nor will any thing but thee alone, *O my Lord, my love, and my All.*

O that my *Will* were conformable to thine, without any reservation or retraction! Take it unto thee (*Dear Lord*) freely and fully, for time and eternity: I will have no will but thine; dispose of me as thou

pleaſeſt, here and hereafter.

O that my *Memory* were diſincombred from all imaginations, and purged from all impreſſions, but of thee only! Empty it, (*ô thou only amiable object of my ſoul,*) and then repleniſh it with ſuch holy and heavenly notions as may beſt pleaſe thy divine Majeſty.

O that my *Vnderſtanding* were imbued with ſome meaſure of the knowledge of thy divinity! O my Lord, infinite in goodneſs, dreadfull in Majeſty, and unſpeakable in all perfection! O my great, gracious and glorious God, Quicken it, ſharpen it, elevate it, and illuminate it, that knowing thee, I may not chooſe but love thee; and that knowing and loving thee, I may be eternally happy.

Behold (*Lord*), I make an abſolute divorce with all *ſelf-love*, *ſenſuality*, and *affection* to creatures; and give thee my ſelf by an irrevocable donation.

Behold, (*Lord*) the keys, the lodging, the treaſure, and the Maſter proſtrate at thy ſacred feet, Enter freely,

freely, possesse all fully, dispose universally, and command absolutely. Put me where thou wilt, give me what thou wilt, treat me as thou wilt, Thine I am, (*ô my Lord, my love, and my All*), for time and



FOR FRIDAY.

Of Mortification, and perfect Abnegation.

The Fifth Exerciſe.

1. O *Eternal, and ever Bleſſed Lord God!* Thou haſt framed me of ſoul and body, and fitted me with faculties proportionable to attain the end of my creation, which is to love thee intirely, and to live with thee eternally. But alas! how far am I from obſerving thy bleſſed and beautifull order?

Thou (*ô Lord*) gav'ſt me a *ſoul* to bear all the ſway in my body; *Reaſon* to have the chief regency in my ſoul; thy *Law* to be the

the guide of my *reason*; and *thy self* to be the sole mover and governour of my *whole man*.

But Oh! how have I willfully crosſ'd thy ſacred deſign? contradicted thy intention, and ſwerv'd from this perfection? My body, is all brutiſh, my ſoul all animall, and my reaſon all ſenſuall. I am all blindneſs, ſelf-love, and unmortification.

Yet I know well, and thou (O *eternall verity*) haſt expreſly told me; that unleſs I renounce all, deny my ſelf, take up my Croſs, and follow thee, I can never become thy true Diſciple.

Ah, harſh words to my carnall ears! *If thou wilt be my diſciple, deny thy ſelf: If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all; give away all, reform all, renounce all, relinquiſh all: If thou wilt poſſeſs life eternal, contemn this life temporal: If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy ſelf in the world: If thou wilt wear a crown with me, bear thy Croſs with me.* But (*O my ſoul*), how wilt thou brook that more diſmall ſen-

tence, *Depart from me, thou accurſed, into eternall fire?*

Wherefore (*O my Lord*) my love, and my all: Since Thou haſt taught me theſe things by thy ſacred word, and ſhewed them by thy holy example: and thou art *the way, the truth, and the life*; Grant, (*O infallible truth*) that I may couragiouſly walk in this thy perfect *way*, that ſo I may happily come to thee, the only true and eternall *life* and *love* of my ſoul.

2. What dreadeſt thou (*O my fearful and faithleſs heart?*) Behold, Chriſt thy King and captain is march'd on before thee; Take up thy Croſs, and travell after him: he leads thee to a Kingdom; heaven is worth thy pains: O take courage to mortifie thy ſelf, deny thy ſelf, and die to thy ſelf; that thou mai'ſt live to *Jeſus*, and with *Jeſus* eternally.

Learn (*O my ſoul*) this ſhort and ſecuring leſſon: *Leave all things, and thou ſhalt find one thing which is all in all.* Take courage, and fight valiantly againſt thy own bad

bad nature; pray, ſuffer, ſtoop, bear repugnances, ſwallow down contradictions, diſgeſt injuries: *the Kingdom of heaven ſuffers violence:* The end thou aymeſt at is *perfection*, the reward of thy conqueſt, is *eternall love*, eternal *life*, eternall *happineſs*.

Behold, (*ô my Lord, my ſtrength, and my ſalvation*), I am fully reſolv'd to lay the ax to the root of this wicked tree. Help me, I beſeech thee with thy grace from above, that I may hew my ſelf out of my ſelf, that I may kill, crucifie, and mortifie my inveagling ſenſuality, cut off my evil inclinations, rectifie my diſordered paſſions, and root out each thought or deſire, which tends not directly to thy honour, will and love, O my Lord and my God!

3. I know (*Lord*) that it is bootleſs to ſtudy *perfection* without the practice of *mortification*; I confeſs I can never *love* thee truly, but in as much as I *hate* my ſelf really; ſuch is the *antipathy* between ſelf-love and thy holy affection: Ah! how can a ſpirit diſtracted with

contrary

contrary inclinations be freely and fully vacant to thy divine contemplation? Put therefore I beſeech thee, a ſluce to my unmortified paſſions, put a bound to my diſtraught heart, and powerfully keep back thoſe innumerous concupiſcences, and corrupt imaginations violently ſucceeding each other, that my united affections may intend thee only, the only object of all happineſs.

Gather (*ô my Lord*) the diſperſed forces of my ſoul from all multiplicity of worldly affections, to the union of thy only love.

Keep, I beſeech thee, my underſtanding, will, memory, imagination, and all my inward and outward ſences from roaming abroad: that carefully attending and entertaining thy divine preſence in my ſoul, I may attain *true* introverſion, ſimplification, and union of my Spirit with thine.

Reform (*ô my Lord*), all the naturall corruptions of my outward man, and redreſs all the ſpirituall infirmities of my inward man; deſtroy

destroy and disperse all internal and external enemies and opposers of thy holy love; possess me perfectly, and dispose of me entirely according to thy divine will and pleasure.

4. To this end, (O bless my weak endeavours, *al-mighty and al-mercifull Lord God*), I will subtract all superfluities from my body, and accustom it to all sorts of sufferings; that so I may fit it up for thee, *O holy Spirit*, who dwellest not with them that are sensuall and subject to sin.

Alas! I have not yet resisted to the effusion of my blood; and should I spill each drop of blood in my body, in this holy quarrel; how little ought I to regard it in respect of the great good I expect?

I will therefore crucifie thee, (*O my flesh*) with all thy concupiscences. I will mortifie my outward senses, the windows by which death steals into my soul, the hinderers of my hearts tranquillity, the destroyers of true devotion, the dispersers of inward recollection, and the utter ruiners of all the good desires which

I conceive and kindle in my prayers; Ah how ſoon is this divine fire cooled, and quenched, not only by ſin, but alſo by the diſtracting images of outward objects?

I will keep a ſpeciall and ſtrict watch over my tongue, on which depends my ſpirituall life or death; and cheeriſh thee (*ô beloved ſilence*) which art the key of piety, the keeper of innocency, and the preſerver of purity.

This is the chief exerciſe of Gods children, not to be carried away with affections of fleſh and blood, but to conduct themſelves according to Gods Spirit;

I will trample down my inferior nature with all it's evil affections and motions, of love, hatred, joy, ſadneſs, deſire, fear, hope, Anger, &c. I will order, diſpoſe, and direct it, according to the laws of reaſon, and thy divine inſpirations, (*ô my Lord and my God*). Grant me courage, I beſeech thee, to quell and curb this moſt dangerous and my greateſt enemy, which is the ſource of all my miſeries; the citadell from whence ſin aſſails me, and Satan fetcheth his forces to fight againſt me; Grant, good Lord, that I may never yeild to this wicked *Eve*, perſuading *Adam* (my Superior will) to

Therefore, every one muſt ſtrive

eat

eat the forbidden fruit; (to consent to unlawfull pleasures.)

to know his own naturall inclinations, and then imploy all his forces, and apply all his prayers and spiritual exercises to quel them.

O that I could tame these cruel beasts, my naturall passions! how soon should I be master of all morall vertues?

O that I could so till this vineyard, so delve this garden, so purge it from all ill weeds of affections, and prune all superfluous surgeons and shoots of passions, that the seed of thy grace, (*ô heavenly husbandman*) might only there take root, increase and fructifie?

5. I will also mortifie my Superiour and rationall part with all the curious and fruitless speculations of my Understanding, all conceits of self-wisdom, naturall prudence, proper judgement, and good liking of my own proceedings: All vain and foolish reflexions of my Memory; And all petty desires and affections of my Will, which relate not to thee, the only object and Lord of my love.

I am resolved, (*ô my Lord*) to nip off each budding passion as soon as it peeps up in my soul to trouble

it;

it in its true repoſe, and to hinder its liberty and tendance to thy love.

I will (by thy gracious aſsiſtance) proceed faithfully and ſincerely in the hatred, denial, and mortification of my *ſelf*, and in the proſecution of thy divine love. And in order to this only end and aym, I make in thy preſence, and from the very bottom of my heart and ſoul theſe particular acts following.

I renounce, (*ô my Lord,*) for the pure love of thee, all affection to worldly things. Give them unto me (*ô gracious God,*) or take them from me, as beſt liketh thy divine Majeſty. I reſign up all my intereſt in any thing, though never ſo near and dear unto me. Behold, (*ô my Lord and lover*) I uncloath my ſoul from all affections whatſoever to creatures, and deſire nothing but thy ſelf-alone O happy nakedneſs, O rich poverty of Spirit, O pure obedience to the divine will in all things! Be you my hearts delight, my whole pleaſure and patrimony.

6. I renounce all *self-seeking*. Ah! my corrupt nature I abhor thee! *Adieu* all *private-interest*, profit, praise, and preferment! I will henceforth performe all my actions and exercises (*O my Lord God*) for thy only pure & perfect love: I will seek to please and praise thee with an inward, ardent and amorous affection, for thy self only, and not for thy gifts or graces.

I renounce all *sensuality*; whether it be in meat, drink, sleep, apparel, curiosity of my five senses, or any thing else whatsoever. (*O my Lord*) I will make no other use of any thy creatures than I am absolutly compell'd to by necessity of nature. I look for no solace but from thee alone, My only comfort and content.

I renounce all *disordered love* to any worldly person. No favour or friendship, (*ô my only amiable Lord God*), no greatness or goodness of any one, shall make me swerve from my exact duty to theewards. No carnall affection to kindred, No tenderness of amitie,

No

No private or publick reſpect; No connivency or correſpondency ſhall make me partiall in the reproof of vice, or praiſe of vertue. O take up my whole heart with thy holy love, that thy perfect image and perpetuall memory may blot out all ſpecies of forreign objects.

I renounce all vain, vicious, idle and unprofitable thoughts, fancies and imaginations. O let my mind not only yield no conſent, but no entrance unto them! O let me never more contriſtate thy holy Spirit with theſe vanities; nor hinder my ſouls advancement and union with thee by theſe divertiſments. I will henceforth compell my heart to ſome good employment: I will no longer permit it to wander and waſt it ſelf in any idle and ſuperfluous curioſities. No, *my Lord and Saviour*, thy bitter and bleſſed paſſion, thy bleſſings and benefits, ſhall be the continuall occupation of my interiour. O what have I to do with tranſitory things, who am made for eternity!

I renounce all care and ſolicitude, which

which necessity, obedience and charity, do not oblige me to. No naturall passions of joy, sorrow, hope, fear, love, hatred, anger or shamefastnes shall make any impression in this heart of mine, which is preingag'd in thy affection, sealed up and setled in thy contemplation. No pretext of lawfulnes, nor shew of fittingnes, nor conceit of compassion, nor excuse of necessity, shall procure the admittance of such passions into my soul, as may any way distract, darken or dull the point of my affection and devotion towards thee, my only Lord and love.

I renounce all bitternes of heart against any one. Is he good? be thou eternally praised in him and by him, (*O bountyfull bestower of all blessings*). Is he wicked? Correct him, (*ô mercifull Creatour,*) comfort, encourage and raise him to amendment. Hath he offended, affronted, injured, or sleighted me? I deserve, (*ô great God*) to be troden on by all creatures, and therefore I freely forgive him for the past, and give him free leave to add

stripes

ſtripes to his injuries for the future. Am I denied the grant of my moſt lawfull and juſt demands? Thou beſt knoweſt (*O eternall wiſdom*) what is beſt for my ſtate and condition; O deny not thy love to my ſoul, and let me be refuſed in all other my requeſts whatſoever.

I renounce all vain-glory, all ſelf-liking and pride which may ariſe from worldly praiſes, al delight ſpringing from any gift of nature or grace which is in me. *Not unto me* (Lord) *but to thy holy name be given all honour and glory.* Alas! what am I? what have I? what can I? All is thine. (*O my bountifull Lord God*) Nothing is mine but ſin; and therefore I deſerve only ſhame and confuſion.

7. I renounce all deſire of delight in my devotions, all ſenſible guſts of grace, and all ſweetneſſes and ſolaces in the inferiour faculties of my ſoul. Ah, my heart! what is all this to thee? follow thou thy Saviour. Thou ſeekeſt thy crucified Jeſus: This is not he, but his gifts. O my Lord, it is thy ſelf I ſeek and

ſigh

ſigh after: If thou ſend'ſt me comforts for the incouragement of my weakneſs, be thou ever praiſed, for thou doſt like a moſt benign and bountifull God: If thou withdraweſt them, ſtill bleſſed be thy providence, which hath ſecret and ſeverall wayes of conducting ſouls to thy ſelf; and if thou wilt make triall of my fidelity, by permitting me to be dull, dry, and deſolate in my devotions, be thou equally and eternally bleſſed.

I renounce all ſcrupulosity of Conſcience, which reflects any way upon the leaſt diffidence or diſtruſt in thy mercy. I am a ſinner (*O Jeſu*) but thou art a *Saviour*. I have great reaſon to dread thy *juſtice*; but greater to hope in thy *goodneſs*. Heaven and earth ſhall ſooner fail, than my confidence in thee my mercifull maker. If thou kill me, I will truſt in thee; And if I had formerly hated thee, and betrayed thee as *Judas* did, I would now with penitent *Magdalen* run to thy bleſſed feet, weep and bemoan

moan my miſery, and hope to obtain thy mercy.

And finally, (*O my Lord*), I abſolutely intirely, and irrevocably renounce my whole *Will* in all things; and totally reſigne whatſoeyer any way concerns me, to thy holy will and pleaſure. I offer up unto thee the full ſacrifice, both principall and acceſſorie, of all that (by thy gift and grace) I am, have, and can; my ſelf, goods, graces, body, ſoul, ſenſes, heart, will, all. I leave no right or title to any *ſelfneſs* in any thing whatſoever: I am no more *my ſelf*, but *thy ſlave*. O Lord, *not my will but thine be done* for time and eternity. O let me will what thou wilt, or not will at all. Let all my deſires be involuntary if they ſwerve never ſo little from thy divine pleaſure. *Dy* ſelf-will: *Live* Jeſus, my Lord, my Love, my All.

FOR



FOR SATVRDAY.

Of Conformity to Christ Crucified.

The Sixth Exercise.

1. *CRucified Iesu!* thou only Lord of my life, life of my love, and love of my soul! O that I could reform my life, Deiform my love, and conform my soul to thee, the absolute pattern of all perfection!

O that I could imprint thy lively and lovely image in my heart! fasten all my affections and imperfections to thy sacred Cross, drown all my desires and defects in thy dear

dear wounds, put off my self totally, and put thee on intirely, *O sacred humanity! ô my suffering Saviour!*

O that I could perfectly imitate thee, the pure exemplar of all vertues! that I could give up my whole self to thee, by an act of irrevocable donation, as thou demandest and commandest!

But alas! I am yet, (*O my Jesu,*) all self-love, sin and sensuality. I acknowledge, (*O my Lord*) what I have, and what I want; I know what I desire, and what I deserve. I confess I am wounded, I am wicked, I am wretched, and I tremblingly come to thee, my heavenly Physician, to be cured, converted, comforted.

O sweet Saviour! for thy mercies sake, and for thy passions sake, forget and forgive what I have been, pitty what I am, satisfie for what I deserve, and supply what I desire.

2. Behold (*most mercifull Jesu*) I first cast my self at thy sacred *Feet*, pierced and fast'ned to the cruel

Croſs for my tranſgreſſions: *Pierce my fleſh* (O my Lord) *with thy fear*, and faſten my ſoul to thy love. O let not pride and preſumption neſtle any longer in that heart, which thou (*O meek Saviour*) loveſt ſo tenderly, and redeemeſt at ſo dear a rate. O my vain glory and arrogancie what have I to do with you, how much do I now deteſt you? Waſh off theſe ſtains, (*O Ieſu*) from my poor ſoul, in theſe ſweet ſtreams flowing from thy wounded *Feet*. O drown theſe my imperfections in theſe ſacred Seas of piety.

Give me (*O Gracious Lord*) ſuch true humility of ſpirit, that I may perfectly perceive the abyſs of my own nothing and naughtineſs, and rightly conceive the immenſity of thy greatneſs and goodneſs; whereby I may depreſs my ſelf unfeignedly, and exalt thee only in my ſoul. Let me be content to be contemned by all creatures, deſire to be deſpiſed, be willing to be troden on as dirt and duſt and the very outcaſt of the whole world: O let me really hate all honour, and humbly pro-

pronounce with mouth and mind; *I am nothing, have nothing, deserve nothing, desire nothing, but only to please thee perfectly,* (my Jesu) *praise thee perpetually, love thee purely, and live with thee eternally.*

3. Grant me also, *good Jesu,* by the merits of these thy wounds, the vertue of perfect obedience. O let me never tire in trampling down self-will, in forsaking my own sense, in subduing self-judgement, in submitting my spirit inwardly to thy inspirations, and outwardly not only to my Superiours injunctions, but even to the commands of all thy creatures. O let me have no propriety, affection, or affectation in my own proceedings, but wholly mind thy holy pleasure in all things.

Let me lay down all my desires at thy sacred *Feet* (*O my Jesu*), saying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me do?* so transforming my will into thine, by an absolute forsaking, denying, and annihilating my whole self.

Let me receive, (*O my Saviour*) as from thy secret providence and

permiſſion, not only patiently but thankfully, all pain, all poverty, all ſhame, all ſickneſs, and all ſufferings whatſoever; acknowledging that I truly deſerve worſe, and deſiring willingly to endure more, that ſo I may have a more perfect reſemblance of thee, *my crucified Lord.*

Let me learn, (*O my Lord*), by thy bleſſed example, the holy leſſon of diſcreet ſilence, not only from ill and idle talk, but even from all needleſs, and unprofitable diſcourſes: Let me rather edifie by the purity of my life and converſation, than by multiplicity of words and conceptions.

O give me (*ſweet Ieſu*) a free and frequent acceſs to thy ſacred *Feet* during the whole courſe of my life, and a ſure comfort in them at the hour of my death.

4. From thy bleſſed *Feet*, (*O my dear Lord*) I raiſe my humble devotion to thy al-holy *Hands*: and beg leave to caſt into the ſweet fountain iſſuing from thy powerful right Paulm, my manifold ſins of malice and injuſtice; with all my faults

faults of hypocrisie and ingratitude, falshood and infidelity, rancor, and revenge.

Renew, (*O Lord God*) a right spirit within my bowels: Let exact justice be the square of all my actions; truth the touchstone of my words; and sincerity the subject of my thoughts.

Let me be punctual in performing my duty to thee, zealous in punishing my self, and charitable in commiserating my neighbour. Let me ever yield, first unto thy sacred Majesty, all honour and glory, reverence and respect, laud and love, gratitude and obedience, with my whole heart, soul, and strength; next, to my Superiors, equals, and inferiours, and lastly to my own body, soul and senses, that which is my duty, and each one of their respective dues. O let me fully perform what I am bound to, carefully eschew what is forbidden me, and uprightly walk according to my calling.

O let me never presume to slight, scorn, suspect, judge, or condemn

any perſon ; but ſincerely ſerve, ſuccour, and ſeek the temporal and ſpiritual good of all men whatſoever, even of my profeſs'd and moſt peeviſh enemies.

Lord Ieſu, give me grace to imitate thy vertues, to be grateſull for thy gifts, and to make uſe of thy goodneſs in order to my ſouls advancement in the way of thy dear love, and deſired union with thy divine Majeſty.

5. And in the Sacred wound of thy left-hand, I humbly intomb all my offences of Negligence, tepidity, ſluggiſhneſs, cowardiſe, and puſillanimity ; all my covetous deſires, all impurity, and all intemperance. Purge me, (*O my powerſull Lord*), purifie me (*O my merciſul Savior*). Give ſtrength, comfort and courage to my feeble and frail nature, that I may paſs undauntedly through all difficulties and dangers, to come to thee, *my Ieſu*, to lay hold on thee, and to repoſe in thee, the only Centre of my deſires.

Grant me (*O my Lord*) chaſtity of body, and cleaneſs of heart ; tem-

temperance in my appetites, and ſobriety in my ſenſes: gravity in my deportment, and moderation in all my proceedings; that nothing may diſlike thee in my ſoul, nor diſſolve the ſacred knot wherwith thou haſt faſten'd me unto thee.

Give me alſo (*O Ieſu my Lord*) perfect poverty of ſpirit. O permit not my ſoul, intended to enjoy thee, the only ſolid and ſatiating riches, to be intangled with the leaſt affection to the poor and periſhable trifles of this world. Behold, I caſt my ſelf, uncloathed from all creatures, into thy naked embraces, (*O crucified Saviour*) I deſire to clip nothing in my folded arms, but a breaſt burning with deſires to pleaſe thee (*my Creatour*), and a heart melting away in thy love. I make choice of thy bare Croſs, (*O Chriſt*) for my beſt inheritance; I ſtretch out my opened folds, to meet thy holy and heavenly huggings. O let me never more be unclaſped from thy bleſſed boſom: Be thou (*O my great-little-naked-Ieſu*) my reſt during the ſhort time of my life,

and my refuge at the dreadful hour of my death.

6. And now, *O mercifull Saviour*, I humbly convert my eyes and contemplation, to thy ſacred *Head* crowned with thorns, and thy divine *Face*, all beſmeared with gore and ſpittle for my ſake: Here, I implore ſtrength, (*O Jeſu*) for the weakneſſes of my head, and pardon for the wickedneſſes of my five wits and ſenſes. (*O my Lord*) I deſire to bury in theſe thy innumerous wounds, the enormous number of my iniquities; and I beſeech thee for theſe thy ſufferings ſake, to adorn my weak capacity with ſo much ſolid wiſdom as may fitly ſuit with my condition. O let me never think, ſpeak, or act any thing, which is not ſeaſoned with the ſalt of diſcretion! Let me ſeriouſly weigh each circumſtance, and patiently wait thy leave and leaſure, before I leap into any work.

Inlighten me, to ſee clearly thy will and pleaſure, and impower me exactly to fulfil and follow it: Open the eyes of my Underſtanding to behold

behold my own baseness and wickedness, and give me thy gracious assistance to reform it: Help me to form a right judgement of the real vileness and vanity of all transitory things, and indue my heart with courage to contemn them.

Inebriate my affection, (*ô amiable Jesu*) with the sweetness of thy love, and let all worldly solaces savour of bitterness to my soul. Let me be deaf, blind, and dumb, to all things which are not thy self, *ô my crucified Saviour.*

Let me prudently discern, and piously perform, each parcel of my duty, in it's due circumstance of time, place, order, measure and manner. Let that holy and innocent simplicity (which is the vertue of thy Saints) shine in all my actions. Let me not be curious to know much, but careful to practise much, and cordial to love thee much, (*O my only Lord and love*).

Cleanse my Will from all self-feeling; Keep my Memory from all superfluities; Close up my Senses from all vanities, that my hap-

py ſoul, ſeparated from all ſenſible images, may quietly tend to thee only, ſweetly repoſe in thee, and continually enjoy thy bleſſed preſence.

O let thy pure and perfect love, (*dear Lord Ieſu*) be the faithfull ſcout-watch over all my proceedings; that no forreign affection, no ſiniſter intention, no ſelf-liking or ſelf-ſeeking may ſteal into my heart, and defraud or diſturb it's happy enjoyment of thee, and holy *unity* with thy divine Spirit.

Grant, (*O my Lord*), that I may prudently turn all good events, and all bad accidents, to my ſpirituall profit; by reflecting wherefore they befall me, of what they warn me, and how far they concern me. Let me learn thereby, gratitude to thy goodneſs, fervour in prayer, contempt of my ſelf, humility of ſpirit, care of my actions, reſignation to thy will amendment of my life, or what elſe thy holy Spirit ſhall pleaſe to intimate by theſe fatherly viſitations.

O ſacred *Head* of my crucified Saviour,

Saviour, be thou my certain succor, during my lives conflict; and my sure place of retreat, in my last agony with death.

7. And lastly I reverently approch to thy dear *Heart*, (*ô amiable Lord Iesu*), opened with a cruell launce in the sight of thy blessed Mother, and thy beloved Disciple, for the love of my soul. *O my Iesu*, I here implore thy pardon for all my perverse affections, and irregular appetites.

Give me thy leave (*ô my loving Lord*) to creep into this sweet *hole of the rock*, this sacred *cleft of the wall*, this unlock'd closet of heavenly treasures, this saving *Ark* of the *new Testament*, and *shut thou* (*O Iesu*) *the door from without*, that free from the deluges of all wickedness, and dangers of the world, flesh, and devil, I may *sit solitarily, silently*, and *sweetly hearkning to thy divine whispers* in my *elevated* soul.

Purge all my impurities, (*ô my dear Saviour*) in the pretious blood streaming from thy patent side, and replenish my heart with thy perfect

love!

love! Oh! drown me, wound me, burn me, and consume me in thy divine flames of affection; that I may love thee strongly, purely, perfectly, perseverantly.

O grant me to leave all things with alacrity for thee (*my beloved Iesu*), though never so great; to lothe all things joyfully for thy love, though never so good; to do all things contentedly for thy honour, though never so hard; to suffer all things patiently for thy sake, though never so painfull; and to persever constantly in my pious practices, for the sole satisfaction of thy holy will, and accomplishment of thy blessed pleasure.

O let me be incessantly calling and knocking at this sacred gate of mercy. Let me be still sighing and seeking after thee, (*my Iesus, my Saviour, my Lord, and my love*): Let me be alwayes thinking, ever talking, and perpetually tending to unite my heart to thine, to conform it unto thine, to transform it into thine, that I may be all thine, and thou all mine for time and eternity.

Grant

Grant also, (*dear Iesu*) that I may truly love all others in thee and for thee. O inflame my charity, quicken my faith, rectifie my intentions, strengthen my confidence in thee, destroy all complacence in my self, establish me in all these my good purposes, and let me be as often minded of my now-promised duty, and incouraged to proceed forwards in the path of perfection, as I shall eye the sacred image of thy crucified humanity.

Elevate my desirous soul unto thy self, (*o Iesu my Lord*) above all chances, changes, and creatures. Oh! let it be so totally attentive to thy presence, so intirely taken up in thy contemplation, and so wholly absorpt in thy love; that no outward objects may touch or trouble it, no inferiour cares or cogitations may intangle it, nothing may impede the free intercourse of thy heavenly friendship, nothing may stop the sweet influence of thy divine graces, or any way interrupt it's happy quiet and holy tranquillity.

O dear and opened *Heart* of my dying

dying Lord Jeſus, be thou my ſweet comfort during this lives pilgrimage, and my ſure Sanctuary in it's laſt period.



FOR

FOR SVNDAY.

of perfect Union with God.

The Seventh Exercise.

1. O Infinite, immense and unmeasurable abyss of all bounty! O ever-flowing fountain of mercy! O undraynable Sea of love! O my Lord, my Soveraign, my Saviour, and my Sanctifier! Behold I return into thee, the sweet source of my beginning; I run into thee the gracious preserver of my being; and I desire to rest in thee, the only hope of my souls happiness.

2. Be thou henceforth, (*O my Creator*)

atour) the ſole ſubject of my thoughts, and the only object of my love: Be thou, (*O God of my heart, heart of my life, life of my ſoul, and ſoul of my love*) my part and my inheritance for ever: I chooſe thee only, I offer up my ſelf wholly, I conſecrate my ſelf heartily, and dedicate my ſelf eternally to thy love, honour, and ſervice.

Ah, good God! where dwelleſt thou? which is the pleaſant place of thy abode, *ô King of glory, and comforter of my ſoul?* I ſeek nothing but thy lovely preſence, I deſire nothing but the preſence of thy love. My ſoul ſighs to ſee thee, my heart covets to have thee, my love longs to enjoy thee, and I can expect no perfect content, untill I am totally united unto thee.

If I now beg a glimpſe of thy divine face, (*O my glorious Lord*) then a drop of thy heavenly grace, and afterwards a dram of thy dear affection; Yet in all this, it is thy ſelf, (*O ſweet God*) which I demand: thy whole ſelf is the only ſatiating object of my boundleſs deſires

and

and unlimited affections.

2. I desire to love thee (*ô only amiable Lord God*), by all means, and beyond all measure, until I am totally transformed into thee by love: O do thou freely and fully possess my spirit, guide it, govern it, inlighten it, inflame it, elevate it, inform it, and transport it, how and when thou pleasest.

Oh! Let all adulterate love be quite banished, all multiplicity vanish away, and all impurity and self-seeking swallowed up: Let thy love be my light, my liberty, my life!

Lord, I desire but two things in this world: To love, see, taste, and enjoy thee my best beloved; and to be humbled, despised, rejected, and esteemed a reprobate for thy love.

O sweet life! O loving Jesu! what a heaven, what a happiness is it to love thee? O how lovely, how loving, and yet how little loved is my God?

O source of all goodness, and centre of all good souls! What is the greatest love of mother, friend, life,

or

or any thing else? Art not thou (*my God*) all this to me, and all in all? Ah, my soul! what didst thou ever best love? And didst thou love thy Lord God as much? I blush, (*O my dear Lord*), I sigh, and am ashamed to answer: I will henceforth do any thing, suffer any thing, and leave all things for thy love. I will not live but languish, not breathe but burn, by reason of extasie and excess of love.

3. O fire! O flames! Burn, consume, annihilate. Alas! *Beauty of Angels*, how late and how little do I love thee? O come into my soul; behold a poor lodging, yet such as it is, it is all thine: I conceal nothing, I reserve nothing; heart, soul, spirit, all is thine own; compose all, dispose of all, depose all unruly passions, impose what penance thou pleasest, I accept it, (*o my Lord*) only repose peaceably in my soul, and let no foul or false affection interpose it self, or disturb this blessed union.

O that I could please and praise thee purely, perfectly, perpetually!

Oh,

Oh, that I could love thee faithfully, freely, and fully, in all and above all things, *ô my all and only love!*

I acknowledge my self bound, (*ô Lord*) in thy chains of charity, I am burned in thy fire, I am wounded, and won to thy love; But what shall I say, What can I give? All I have is not worthy of thee, and yet is thine already: Ask (*my sweet Lord*) and have, choose and take, make me such as thou desirest, and then take me to thy desire.

Give thy self, (*ô great God*) to my soul, and then take my soul with thy self in it: My life, liberty, love and all is thine own. My last will is already made, in which I bequeath all to thee, Thine own death and passion, all thy mercies and merits, all the praises and perfections of thy dear Mother and the blessed Saints and Angels, and all the goods, glories and splendors of all thy creatures.

All that I am, have, and can, both spirituals and temporals; kindred,

dred, friends, riches, health, honors, estates, offices, devotion, all is at thy disposition. I am resolute, (*ô my Lord*) I am resigned and indifferent, to have them increased or diminished, to use them to thy glory, or to lose them altogether.

4. I give thee back, (*ô merciful Maker*) my whole being, either to be what thou wilt, or to be nothing at all; to love thee, or not to live at all.

I offer to thee, (*ô pious Redeemer,*) my sins to pardon, my works to perfect, my will to purifie. I offer thee my wounds to cure, my soul to cleanse, and my spirit to comfort.

I offer to thee (*O holy Spirit*) my intentions to rectifie, my inclinations to sanctifie, my affections to deifie.

Finally, I offer all for *one*, I give all to *one*, and all I desire is to be all *one* with thee, *my all and only Lord and love.*

Thou hast given me, (*O my bountiful Creator*), the whole world in free-hold, for one penny of Rent,

Rent, saying; *Child, give me thy heart*: O Lord! Let this penny never want the superscription of thy grace, and let me never want thy grace to pay this rent.

O my Lord, all that I have is but two small mites; I cast them into thy hands, and had I more, I would give more: Dispose of them both (*dear Lord*), of my body and soul, as best pleaseth thee, that thy will may be perfectly performed, and thy name purely sanctified in both.

O sweet God of my heart! Let me embrace thee in the two arms of profound humility, and perfect charity.

O let my heart faint and melt away in the fire of thy divine love, let me lose my self to find thee, be out of my self to live in thee, and be empty of my self to be full of thee.

O sun of Justice, dissolve with a beam of thy brightness the frost of my heart, and resolve it into tears of affection.

5. *O beautiful and best-beloved of my soul!* I am weary of this wretched

wretched world: and I breathe, thirſt and ſigh after thee the ſweet fountain of life-giving and ſoul-ſaving waters: *O thou true reſt and refreſher of my faint and feeble heart*, out of whom there is neither comfort nor content, Let me ſhroud my ſelf under the ſhadow of thy wings, untill iniquity and infirmity have an end.

Come, (*Lord Jeſu*) Speak thy ſweet words of love to my languiſhing ſoul, for thy ſervant hears thee. Give me courage, alacrity, fervour and fidelity in thy ſervice, the few remaining moments of my wretched and weariſome pilgrimage.

O reſt, long expected, and much ſighed after! where ſhal I ſeek thee? and when ſhall I find thee? where ſleepeſt thou (*O dear Spouſe*) at midday, in the heat of love? Where is thy ſecret cabinet of Contemplation, which thou hideſt from the wiſdom of worldlings, and revealeſt to little ones and humble of heart? O ſhew me the bed of divine Union, wherein thou repoſeſt with the

ſimple,

ſimple, ſolitary, and mortified ſoul! O let my poor heart have the honour and happineſs to reſt in thee, to remain with thee, and to be united to thee!

O God of love! wound my ſoul with thy ſweet wounds of love, which nothing can cure but death, wean it from the worlds vanity, and wed it to thy increated verity; that treading all creatures under me, I may be rapt into thee (*my Creator*) above my-ſelf, and there like the happy Dove in the ſecure Ark, repoſe my weary and faint lims in the boſom of thee, *my Soveraign Lord and lover*.

6. *O divine wiſdom!* Lead me into the ſolitude, ſpeak unto my heart, teach me thy holy will in all occurrences. My deep ſighs, and ſecret deſires are not hid from thee; Thou knoweſt nothing can fully cure, comfort and content me but thy ſelf, the *one and only neceſſary thing*: O take my ſelf and all, and give me that *one thing* in whom are all things.

O ſweet waters of divine Love! which

which flow from the bleſſed boſom of the divinity, and from the open ſide of my Saviours humanity! Run into my bowels, and like pure oyl, penetrate and poſſeſs every parcel of my ſpirit; Irrigate and inebriate it, overflow and abſorp it, that it may be transformed and conformed to the divine Spirit, ſo that all my actions, cogitations, and affections may be ſpiritual, divine, and Deiform.

O let my raviſh'd ſoul, full of life and fire, break forth into theſe flames of joy and jubilation, *I have found him, whom my ſoul loves: I have him, and I will hold him.* This is he, which by reading I fought, by meditation I found, by prayer I deſired, and by contemplation I enjoy.

O how the earth ſtinks? how loathſom are all creatures to me? O taſt, O ſweetneſs, O true and ſolid pleaſure! O how great is the difference between this ſpiritual, and all fleſhly delights? *O the multitude of thy ſweetneſſes, which thou haſt laid up, O Lord, for them that fear*

fear and love thee! O lights! O delights! O extasies of spirit!

Wound me, (*O sweet God*) burn me, consume me, crucifie me; Let me cry out with that Lover, Retain, O Lord, the floods of thy grace, or inlarge my heart, for I can hold no longer. I thirst, *Lord*, give me this water. O when? how long? how much?

7. *O my soul!* how good is it for us to be here? *O sweet and secure home and harbour!* Let us remain and rejoyce here for ever. I will keep thee, *O my dearly beloved*, and I will kiss thee; I will conjure thee to remain with me, I wil rather lose my self, than leave thy presence.

(*My beloved is mine*; his honour is mine, his heart is mine, his heaven is mine: *And I am his*; behold the key, the keeper, the soul, the body, the lord, the whole (*ô my God*) is thine; Behold, my liberty, my life, my love, all is thine, (*ô my Jesu*) and thine alone; Repose therefore, as a sweet posie, between my breasts; sleep, like a bridegroom, in my heart; and reign, like a King, in the

most intim closet of my soul.

Come, Lord Jesu, come quickly; take full possession of thy own: Come, and please thy self, love thy self, and serve thy self in me, as thou desirest and deservest to be pleased, loved, served.

Let thy love, (*O King of love*) be the life of my soul, and the lease of my life, that when I cease to love, I may cease to live.

In thy love, (*O Jesu*) I end this act of love, though my desire actually to love thee be endless: Oh! let me live and dy in thy *love*, and for thy *love*, that by *love* I may for ever reign and remain with thee, in thy Kingdom of *love*. Amen.

THE THIRD TREATISE OF THE SPIRITVALL CONQUEST:

Or,

The Aſcent of the pious ſoul by Steps and Degrees of Vertues, to the happy Mountain of Perfection.

Pſal. 83. v. 8.

They ſhall go from vertu into vertu. The God of Gods, ſhall be ſeen in Syon.

AT PARIS, M.DC.LI.

42.
1. 7
14.

To the Devout Champions tending to Perfection.

THis Spirituall ladder (O dear Souls) will ſhew you how much you have profited in pure & ſolid devotion; how far you have proceeded in the way of the Spirit; how forward you are in ſeeking God, & forſaking your ſelves; & what progreſs you have made in your journey towards heaven: Contemplate therefore your ſelves often, in this impartial mirrour; bewail your backwardneſs, ſhake off your ſloathfulneſs, increaſe your fervour, and encourage your diligence to

To the Devout Champions,
climb this sacred Mountain of Perfection, and to pass on
Psal. 83. 8. *cheerfully* from vertu to vertu, *till you happily come to the beatifying* sight of your Lord God in Sion.

The

The Seven Degrees of Perfection.

1. *Upon the first Step, stand they who are Faithfull Catholikes, Fearful of Gods judgements, and Careful to avoid* mortall sin. *These are Beginners, who have little inward light, stand upon slippery ground, and though they may be saved, yet so as by fire.*

2. *On the second Step, stand Proficients, who strive to avoid* venial sins, *and conquer their sensuality; but are slow in tending to Perfection, and subject to be self-conceited.*

3. *On the third Step, stand they who casting off sloath, tame themselves with* austerities; *but their intentions are not pure, nor they well grounded in self-denial.*

4. *On the fourth Degree, stand they who have gotten into their* interiour; *but yet seek for solaces, and*

are discouraged with adversities.

5. *On the fifth Step, stand they who are fully* resigned, *and perfectly obedient; but fail for want of experience and courage.*

6. *On the sixth Step, stand they who have gotten a perfect* habit of resignation *and constancy; but desire comforts to enable their perseverance; Here also stand they who are* indifferent *to comforts or desolations, but yet they rest in Gods favours with some propriety: Here furthermore stand they who are satisfied* with God only; *but are not absolutely as willing to leave divine favours, as to have them.*

7. *On the seventh and highest Degree of Perfection, stand the elevated and contemplative souls, Gods faithfull friends and favourites, who are* perfectly indifferent, resign'd and obedient *in all things, to his divine will and pleasure.*



The first and lowest Degree of Perfection.

THe *first Step* and groundwork of all vertue and perfection, is, *To be well setled in the Catholick faith, Fearfull of Gods severe judgements*, and *Careful to avoid all mortal sin.* This is the Church-porch, and entrance into Gods holy Temple; but they who stand here, remain cold in charity, careleſſe and undiligent in their leſſer duties, remiſs in ſpiritual exerciſes, negligent in thinking of their obligation, by which they ſtand ingaged to tend towards perfection; and finally they greedily gape after all conveniencies of their corrupted nature, and give up them-

Vpon the firſt ſtep of this ladder, ſtand Beginners, who are Faithful Catholikes, Fearful of Gods judgments Careful to avoid mortal ſin;

themſelves to glut and ſolace their depraved ſenſuality.

But they have little inward light,

Theſe Beginners have very little or no inward light, they know not what is the meaning of mortification, what it is to get into their interiour, or what Introverſion ſignifies; but they ſeemingly ſatisfie and ſecure themſelves, in that they have a will to avoid the known and capitall ſins, whereby they hope to eſcape hell, and avoid Gods heavy judgements.

Stand upon ſlippery ground,

Surely ſuch ſouls ſtand upon very unſafe and ſlippery ground, and their ſalvation is in a doubtfull and dangerous condition: for they are ſo blinded and bewitched with *ſelf-love* and *ſenſuality*, that they cannot well diſtinguiſh, perfectly diſcern, nor rightly judge, what ſins are of mortall danger, and what not; ſo that converſing dayly amidſt ſuch multitudes of perils, and ſhaking hands with the world, the fleſh and the devil, with ſo much freedom, & ſo little care and precaution; what do they elſe, but dance (as it were) upon the very brink of hell, from whence,

whence, if they once tread awry, they infallibly tumble headlong into that bottomless dungeon of eternall perdition?

Yet in case they should indeed foot it so warily all their life time, that death takes them not tripping, nor fall'n into mortall offence, (a thing most rare, and not to be presumed on by any one, who carries himself so carelessly), they shall surely be saved; *but so, as by fire*: They must expect a most sharp and severe punishment, a long and piercing purgatory, by reason of their unmortified affections to venial sins, their giving scope to their unbridled senses, their neglect of Gods love, their coldness in charity, and their tepidity in tendance to perfection. And as for their good works, they are not likely to be there much available; since their groundwork was servil fear, their end self-love, and their whole drift and intention altogether sinister, and deficient from that purity and perfection, wherewith they should have been performed.

And though they may be saved,

Yet so, as by fire. 1 Cor. 3. 13. 15.

The

The Second Degree of Perfection.

On the 2. ſtep, ſtand Proficients, Who are careful to ſhun venial ſins, and conquer ſenſuality;

THey ſtand on this *ſecond Step*, who hearkning to Gods holy inſpirations, following his internall attractions, and obeying the ſweet invitations of his Spirit, keep themſelves diſingaged from all vain affections to the world, yield not to the enticements of fleſh and blood, reſiſt the ſuggeſted temptations of the devil, and carefully avoid all occaſions of *offending their Lord* and maker, *ſo much as venially.*

To help on this pious deſign, they put themſelves into good company, ſeek to converſe with vertuous people, are diligent in their devotions, zealous frequenters of the Sacraments, and painfull practiſers of the corporall and ſpirituall works of charity.

But by reaſon they are yet ſlow in the purſute of ſolid vertue, and ſlack

slack in their tendance to Perfection, they are still subject to fall into their enemies snares and ambushes: For they are terrified at the difficulty of getting an entire conquest over their passions and imperfections, and therefore seem to satisfie and solace their minds with what they have already done, and left, for the love of God, presuming overmuch upon his goodness, flattering themselves with a certain self-security, fancying that they are in a sufficiently good condition; whence they fall into a false opinion of their own worth, and an erroneous conceit that little or nothing is wanting to them: All which maxims manifest their secret pride and presumption, and render them by degrees, careless of their further increase and progress in the path of spirituality.

But are slow in tending to perfection,

and subject to be self-conceited.

The

The Third Degree of Perfection.

VNto which those proficients are ascended, who have *more perfectly vanquish'd all affections to the world*, subdued their sensuality to the rule of Reason, and changed their sloathfull and sluggish indisposition, into a noble and generous resolution of *mortifying each unruly passion*, and wrestling with their evil inclinations: And to this end, they fall seriously and severely to work, applying corporall austerities, fastings, watchings, wearing of hair-cloaths, long vocall prayers, and faithfully practise such painfull means, as may probably help them forward in their desired conquest over themselves in the acquisition of vertues, and in their tendance to perfection.

On the 3. step, stand they, who casting off sloath, tame themselves with austerities;

But their intentions are not pu,

But because their intentions, in the performance of these pious practices, are not pure, sincere, divested of

of all ſelfiſhneſs, and ſimply for Gods ſupream honour alone; but have ſome ſmall mixture of ſervil fear, which looks upon hell and puniſhment; or of ſelf-love, which eyes heaven and reward, rather than Gods only pleaſure and liking; therefore they are yet ſeduced by the devils ſubtilty, and drawn into a certain ſecret delighting in their own ſuppoſed good deeds, relying over-much upon theſe *outward exerciſes*, and neglecting their *inward man*, by not laying *there* the true groundwork of ſolid vertue, which is perfect *mortification and ſelf-deniall*; but following the track of nature, in it's love to theſe ſeeming, ſenſible, and ſatisfying practices, not duly weighing how highly they hinder the operation of Gods holy Spirit in their ſouls.

Nor are they well-grounded in ſelf-denial.

The

The Fourth Degree of Perfection.

VNto which they are climb'd, who rightly considering the nobility of the inward exercise, *get into themselves*, and there study diligently how they may unite their souls to their Creatour, with fervent desires and filiall affections.

Upon the 4. step, stand they, who have gotten into their interiour;

Yet these are oftentimes *self-seekers*, lovers of their own will, and desirers of solaces and sweetnesses in their devotions, rather than the pure pleasure of God: *they glory in their own way of the Spirit, and prefer it before that of their brethren*; which shewes them to have a touch of spirituall pride, and argues them of immortification.

But yet look for solaces,

And though in time of comfort they seem well resigned to endure all dereliction; yet they are troubled when any cross comes upon

on them, and discouraged when the least adversity befalls them: If they are commanded to leave what they love, or act what they like not, they soon shew what they are, & *what spirit leads them*; they declare their disobedience, fall into grudgings and murmurations, and make apparent the hypocrisie of their *pretended resignation*. Such persons therefore must strive seriously to restrain this *willfull propriety*, and give up themselves *truly* and *totally* to Gods good pleasure, and the *guidance* of their *spirituall conductor*, without any manner of restraint or reservation: which is the only secure and short way for them to attain to the next higher Degree of Perfection.

and are discouraged with adversities.

The

The fifth Degree of Perfection.

On the 5. ſtep, ſtand they, who are fully reſigned,

and perfectly obedient;

IN which are placed thoſe pious ſouls, wch *truly renounce their own wills* in all their actions, exerciſes, and devotions, and are fully reſigned to the divine pleaſure and diſpoſition: Theſe promptly obey, not only Gods inward calls, and their Superiours commands, but even the becks of all men living, in all things which appear conſonant to Gods honour, and conducing to their ſelf-denial and mortification: Their chiefeſt care is to conſerve cleanneſs of heart, their dayly prayer is to purchaſe purity of conſcience, and their unwearied endeavours drive onely at the perfect union of their ſouls to their ſweet Saviour.

But becauſe they are not yet maſters in this ſacred art, but young and raw Scholars in this track

track of true and totall resignation; they sometimes fail for want of courage, constancy, Steadiness and solidity in it; all their affections are not absolutely rooted out and mortified by sufficient use and experience in spirituality, which makes them yet waver in their station, stagger in their resolution, slip down now and then into some lower pit of *self-love*, and admit of some little point of *propriety*: yet they soon arise, return, and regain their standing, by the help of *self-denial* and *resignation*.

But fail for want of experience, and courage.

The Sixth Degree of Perfection.

VPon which stand those holy Contemplatives, who by much experience and long continued diligence, *have gotten a perfect habit of resignation*, and a resolute perseverance and constancy in their good purposes, free from all mixture of *self-will*, *propriety*, or the least taint

On the 6. step, stand they, who have a habit of resignation;

taint of *contradiction from their Lords will and pleaſure*; faithfully acknowledging that all things whatſoever, even the greateſt adverſities, and moſt grievous temptations, turn to the ſpiritual advancement of ſuch ſouls, as truly ſeek God, which is their only aym and employment.

But deſire comforts to enable them.

Yet even into theſe high entertainments with God, there may creep in a certain ſecret inclination to themſelves, and an over-eager appetite towards guſts and ghoſtly comforts, upon pretext to be thereby enabled to endure all deſolations and adverſities: which intention being not *preciſely pure* from all propriety, and *abſolutely perfect* in divine charity, is a great impediment to the operation of the holy Ghoſt in their ſouls: *For what gifts ſoever* (of nature or grace, outward or inward, temporal or ſpiritual) *are not directly uſed in order to our own humiliation, and our Creators honour, are abuſed by us to our great prejudice in ſpirituality*, and prove hinderances and ſtumbling-blocks

Note well this excellent maxime.

in

in our way to perfection.

And upon this same Stair, stands also another rank of holy persons, who have brought their *inward man* to an *intire indifferency in all things*, whom neither prosperity puffs up, nor adversity dejects, who have their Lords will for the sole law of their actions, and his only love for their *All in all*: They desire to be truly conformable to their *crucified Saviour*, and to keep an internall quiet, content, and constancy in all desolation and dereliction: They are well grounded and setled in a simple and sincere affection to their Lord God; which enables them not only *to act* great and heroique things, but also *to suffer* all grievous and hard matters.

Here also they stand, who are intirely indifferent.

These illuminated souls receive many sweet and secret graces from the hands of the heavenly bounty, as rewards of their sincere fidelity; their Understandings are repleniſh'd with clarity, their Memories are possest with objects of piety, their Wills are burnt and consumed with perfect charity; But yet these aboundances

But yet rest in Gods favours with some propriety.

dances of divine favours may ſometimes turn to their prejudice, when they reſt in them with the leaſt ſpirituall guſt and propriety.

Here furthermore are ſeated thoſe almoſt perfect ſouls, which have really reſigned up themſelves and all, purely to Gods pleaſure, *are fully contented with him alone*, and remain wholly ſatisfied with all that he either ſends or ſuffers, looking upon himſelf only, and not upon any of his gifts or goods.

Here furthermore they ſtand, who are ſatisfied with God only;

Theſe are yet more frequently viſited from above, with divine illuſtrations, and ſolaced with high and heavenly comforts: but becauſe they are not as really reſigned to leave them, and to be bereft of them, as they are ready and willing to have and enjoy them, they ſeem to have yet a little point left of *ſecret propriety* within them; and muſt therefore take yet a higher flight, before they can pearch upon the upmoſt round of this ſpirituall ladder: which is,

But are not as willing to leave divine favours as to have them.

The Seventh and highest Degree of Perfection.

WHereunto those elevated, and perfect souls are soared up, which are throughly inflamed, absorpt, *and extasied in divine contemplation*, wholly dead to the world, abstracted from flesh and blood, and living (as it were) only by vivacity of Gods love, and quickning of his holy Spirit within them.

On the 7. step, stand the perfect, contemplatives,

These are the dear darlings, blessed minions, holy favourites, and happy spouses of *the most high*, though they sometimes live here below in perpetual oblivion and obscurity: They are brim full of heavenly gifts and graces, lifted up above themselves to taste the unexplicable sweetnesses, and behold the unspeakeable glimpses of the divinity: Yet they rest not in these sublime prerogatives with the least pleasure or propriety, but utterly renounce *all self-seeking and interest*;

Gods faithfull friends and dear favorites.

rest; being ſecurely grounded in ſolid faith, cloathed only with naked charity, and accompanied with abyſſal humility, counting themſelves worthy of all abjection, conceiving themſelves the very worſt of all creatures, and contenting themſelves to be by all ſo taken and treated. Their whole comfort is in the *Croſs of Chriſt*: they neither look for ſuch plentifull ſhowers of heavenly feelings, viſitations illuminations, and influences of the Spirit, nor ungratefully neglect them; but remain in perfect indifferency, and offer up themſelves as obedient inſtruments to all that the holy Ghoſt ſhall vouchſafe to operate by or in them: They receive all things from their Creators hands into their open and diſintereſſed ſouls, as if they felt them not; ever praiſing the divine piety, admiring his liberality, returning all to his honour, reſigning all to his will, and being ſatisfied with his providence and diſpoſition in all temporall and ſpirituall events whatſoever.

Who are perfectly indifferent, and abſolutely reſigned and obedient.

Final-

Finally their *outward man* deſires no earthly conſolation; their *inward man* breathes nothing but the pure love of God; and the *whole compoſitum* begs nothing but a perfect conformity to his *crucified Lord and maſter*, in all things, but eſpecially in *ſelf-denial and abnegation*, the only ſafe and ſecure guide of each Step in this his long pilgrimage towards perfection.





THE FOURTH TREATISE OF THE SPIRITVALL *CONQUEST*:

Or,

The Triumph of the elevated Soul, in the amorous embraces of her divine Spouse.

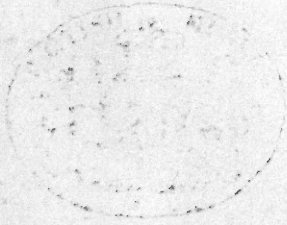
Canticles. 5. v. 8.

Tell my beloved, that I languish with love.

Cant. 2. v. 16.

My beloved to me, and I to him.

AT PARIS, M.DC.LI.



42.
1.7.
15.

To the Loving Spouſes, ayming at divine Vnion with their heavenly Bridegroom.

Having thus happily Fought and foiled your ghoſtly enemies, (O Victorious ſouls;) 2. *Prudently diſcovered and avoided their dangerous ambuſhes;* 3. *Gotten the right uſe of your Spirituall weapons, by the frequent and faithfull practice of your pious exerciſes;* 4. *And courragiouſly climb'd up from one*

1. The Spirituall Conflict.

2. The Seven Ambuſhes.

3. The Seven Exerciſes.

4. The Seven degrees of perfection.

one degree of ſolid vertu to another, from the loweſt Step of Devotion to the higheſt degree of Perfection: It only remains, that you now take your 5. *laſt and ſublimeſt flight, from this mountain-top to the throne of divine love and Uuion: to facilitate which heavenly enterpriſe, you may fitly make uſe of this* holy ladder, *rais'd up for your ſouls aſſiſtance in thoſe her high-ſoarings; that ſo ſhe may conveniently repoſe herſelf, upon each myſticall Step thereof, prune her wearied wings, fetch breath a while, and get new ſtrength, and more light, to aſcend higher and higher, till ſhe arrives at the full height and head of* it, *which leans upon the very boſom of the Divinity it ſelf, and leads into the bedchamber of her beloved Bridegroom; where finding*

5. This ladder of divine love, conſiſting of ſeven rounds.

finding a ſure footing, and a ſecure reſting place, forgetting the whole world, her ſelf, and all the multiplicity of things which ſhe left below, and from which ſhe hath happily unfetter'd, diſingaged, and looſned her-ſelf, ſhe ſits ſilently, ſolitarily, quietly, and contentedly, attending to that One alone *whom ſhe only loves, in whom only ſhe lives, and from whoſe ſweet embraces ſhe deſires never more to be ſeparated.*

The Seven Degrees of divine Love.

1. *In the first degree, the soul is wounded with love, sick of love, and languishing with love.*

2. *In the second, she seeks her Physician.*

3. *In the third, she fears her own unworthiness, and the loss of her beloved.*

4. *In the fourth, she willingly suffers for love.*

5. *In the fifth, she is impatient in her desires of love; and must either obtain, or dy for it.*

6. *In*

6. *In the sixth, she runs lightly, swiftly and nimbly after love; grows bold and confident in love; and becomes united to her beloved.*

7. *In the seventh, she enjoys her beloved perfectly, and perpetually.*

The



The first round of this ladder of divine Love.

Upon this first Step, stands the pious soul, which (after a long experience in the way of the Spirit, and a serious application of her self to the practice of solid vertue, having truly gotten into her own *interiour*, and happily ascended the steep mountain of Perfection) is become deeply *wounded with love*, sweetly *sick of love*, and heartily *languishing after love*: So that she crys out with that fainting Spouse in the Canticles; *O tell my beloved, that I languish with love.*

In the first degree, the soul is wounded with love, sick of love, and languishing for love.

This *infirmity is not to death, but for Gods glory*; for the Soul in this state

state defyes all sin, deserts whatsoever is not God, and desires him only: she grows weary and sick of all creatures, and aspires after the embraces of her Creator: And as an infirm person, loseth appetite, and loathes all the wonted contents of nature; so here, the soul feels no gust, takes no pleasure, findes no comfort; in any earthly objects. Shee lyes sick, and seized on by this *mystical feaver*, caused by the violent *heat of heavenly love*: and here she is in the degree of *contemplative purgation*, when she findes no support, no stay, no taste, no quiet, no content, in any thing whatsoever; And therefore she soon soars up from this Step to the next.

The Second Degree of Love.

In the 2: she seeks her Physician.

WHerein she rouseth and raises up her self, and casts about which way she may *seek and find her loving Physician*, who can only cure and comfort her; she gets up early, and eagerly enquires after him with-

without intermission or cessation, whom she failed to *find in her bed at night*, (in the first degree): She faithfully follows the prints of his steps, turns over natures book, dives into all creatures, questions all she meets: Oh! *have you seen him, whom my soul loveth?* Yet she stays no where, stoops not to the lure of any created object; she demands, and passes on, she leaves all for him whom she only loves and longs after: She holds no discourse with Angels themselves, but listens only to his heavenly voice, and desires nothing, but to see a glimpse of his beatifying countenance: *O shew me thy face; let thy sweet words sound in my ears!*

Here, love bears all the sway, and hath made so deep an impression in the pious soul, that she is perpetually solicitous for love, ever sighing after love, and still carping, caring, and seeking for her well beloved in all things: All her thoughts tend to him, all her discourses drive at him, all her affairs end in him: If she sleeps, she dreams of him; if she

wakes,

wakes, she talks of him: Finally she is always, in all things, in all places, transported into this object of her love, and swayed towards this Centre of her life: And recovering new strength, ascends upward to a further Degree.

The Third Degree of Love.

In the 3. she fears her own unworthiness and the loss of her beloved. Psa. 111.

WHerein she works with more heat and vigour, and of which the King-Prophet speaks; *Blessed is that person who fears the Lord; for he will exceedingly desire to fulfill his holy laws.* Whence may be inferr'd; that if *Fear*, which is *Loves daughter*, cause such effectual desires; how efficacious will those desires be, which proceed immediately from Love it self?

The Soul in this Degree beleeves that her best works, done in the behalf of her beloved, are very base & inconsiderable: she runs over her Registers of accounts, sums up her numerous exploits, measures her long sufferances, and surveys her high services;

services; and they seem at best but poor and mean performances of a greater duty: she finds them nothing worth, by reason of the excess of affection which inflames and consumes her. If *Jacobs love to Rachel* had so powerful an influence upon his spirit, that his twice seven years apprentiship seem'd to him but *few dayes, by reason of the ardour of his desire*: What admirable effects will the Creators love produce in that Soul, which it hath absolutely seized upon, entirely possess'd, and throughly penetrated in this third Degree? She will be piously troubled, and angry with her self, that she doth *so little* for *so great a* Majesty: and if she might lawfully, she would most willingly give up her self to be minc'd into a thousand morcels for his love, honor and service, and receive therein full comfort, content, joy and satisfaction. a Gene. 29. 20.

It truly seems to her, that shee troubles the earth she treads on, and the ayr she breathes in; and that she unprofitably takes up a place in the world, as a barren tree, which

which brings forth neither flowers nor fruit: Hence ſprings a further admirable effect, that ſhe verily thinks her ſelf the worſt of all things created, conſidering what ſhe owes, and calculating what ſhe pays; for *Love* teacheth her how much God deſerves and *Humility* tells her how little ſhe doth: and becauſe ſhee finds that all her beſt endeavours are full of defects and imperfections; and that her higheſt way of correſponding to the love of her heavenly Lord, is ſo low and unbeſeeming his Majeſty, ſhe is inwardly pained and confounded in her ſelf. A ſoul in this ſtate is far from any puff of pride, preſumption, vain glory, or cenſuring of others; and is therefore duly diſpoſed to mount up to the next Degree.

The Fourth Degree of Love.

In the 4. ſhe willingly ſuffers for love.

WHich is of *ſuffering for her beloved*, freely and cheerfully, without the leaſt repining, or reluctancy; becauſe *true love makes*

the

the heavieſt burdens ſeem light, and the greateſt labours eaſie. In this eſtate was that Spouſe when ſhe ſpake to her beloved: *Place me as a ſignet upon your heart, put me as a ſeal upon your arm, becauſe love is ſtrong as death, &c.* Cant. 8. 6.

The Spirit hath here ſuch a vigour, that it abſolutely ſubjects and ſubdues the fleſh, and as much ſlights all motions of ſenſuality, as a well rooted tree doth the wagging of one of his little leaves. Here the ſoul ſeeks not at all her own guſt or comfort, either in God, or any of his gifts; nor demands any grace in order to her own ſolace or ſupport, but all her care is, to caſt about her which way ſhe may *render ſome acceptable ſervice to the Divine Majeſty*, and how ſhe may content and pleaſe him in any thing which ſhe can do or ſuffer, (for that he deſerves it for his love and goodneſs towards her,) though ſuch her ſervices coſt her never ſo dear.

Many ſeek their own content in God; But Few ſeek to give God content.

Ah! *Good God*, how many of your followers *ſeek in you their own content* and comfort, ſigh after your favours,

favours, expect your cherishings, and run after your gifts and graces; But alas! how few are they, who *strive to give you content*, and to present you with any worthy donative at their own cost and charges, without some touch of *self-love or proper interest*? You are ever open-handed, (*ô bountifull Creator*), and ready to showre your heavenly benefits upon our heads; but we are always loath to employ *that* in your love *which* we receive from your liberality: though this is the only way to have them continued and increased.

This degree of love is very *high and heroick*: For as the soul here seeks her Lord so seriously, and adheres to him so sincerely; that she is ready, willing, and desirous, to suffer any thing for him. So his divine Majesty often & ordinarily rewards this her fidelity with putting her in possession of joy, and giving her many secret, sugred, and delicious visits: For the immense love of the Word incarnate *Christ Jesus*, permits him not to see his loving Spouse

Spouse suffer purely for his sake, without hastning to her comfort and succour. Hence she speedily gets up to,

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The Fifth Degree of Love.

WHich moves the inflamed soul to a certain *holy impatience in her desires of being joyned to her beloved*: She is seiz'd with such a vehement ardour to overtake him, and to be united to him, that all stay and tarriance, seems to her, tedious and insupportable. She thinks often to have found him, caught him in her arms clasp'd him in her bosom but perceiving her self still frustrated of her desired object, faints through her eagerness of spirit; as he did who cry'd out, *My soul covets and decays after the Courts of my Lord.*

In the 5. she is impatient in her desires of love,

Psa. 83. 1.

She cannot subsist long in this condition: She must either obtain her love, or cease to live; she is as eager in her desires, as *Rachel* was to see her self a mother, when she said

And must either obtain it or dy for it.

Gen.30.1 said to *Jacob*, *Give me children or else I dy.* Here the soul feeds altogether on love, as she only hungers and thirsts after love So that she quickly raises her self up to,

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The Sixth Degree.

In the 6. she runs lightly, swiftly & sweetly after love, Isai.40.32

WHere she *runs lightly, swftly, and nimbly, after her beloved,* being fortified with *Faith*, lifted up with *Hope*, and quickned with *Charity*: Of which degree the Prophet speaks; *They who hope in our Lord, shall exchange their strength, shall take Eagles wings, and fly without fainting*: The reason of this lightness, is the overspreading, and dilatation of these *three Theological vertues* in the soul, whereby it becomes so elevated, that it wants but little of a *totall purification*. Wher-
Ps.118.32 upon that enlarged soul said; *I have run over the way of your commandments, when you dilated my heart.*

grows bold and confident in love,

Hence she grows hardy in love, and putting on a confident boldness, is piously, amorously, and strongly

trans-

transported beyond the ordinary limits of reason: So that she stays not according to judgement, retreates not according to counsel, nor governs and represses her impetuosity, violence, and forwardness, by the rules of modesty and shamefastness; because the peculiar favor, which her best beloved shews her, communicates to her a holy and heavenly audacity. In this state was that hardy spouse, which beg'd *a kiss of her beloveds mouth*: And *Moses*, when he peremptorily said to God, *Either pardon this people, or blot my name out of the book of life, wherein thou hast registred it.*

Cant. 1. 1.

Exo. 32. 32.

and becomes united to her beloved.

And then burning sweetly in pure and perfect union with her beloved, she cryes out; *I have found* the long desired object of my affections, *I will not let go my hold*, nor permit him to escape out of my embraces, &c. Here her holy thirst and hunger is satisfied, and she enjoys such unexplicable treasures of delicious love, that were whole volumes fill'd up with the description thereof, the greater part would still be

be left uncompriſed. And from th
eſtate the amorous Soul paſſeth
to the laſt Degree, which be lon
not to this mortall life.

The Seventh and laſt Degree.

In the 7. ſhe enjoys her beloved perfectly, &c.

WHich likens her totally to he
well-beloved Creator, b
the clear viſion of divine eſſence
This ſhe enjoys, as ſoon as (being
here in this world arrived at th
Sixth degree of this divine ladder o
love) ſhe departs hence to her happy eternity.

Theſe bleſſed Souls, (which are very few in number) are ſufficiently purged and purified by Love, which hath done that in them *here*, which Purgatory doth in others *elſwhere*: ſo that to them belongs
Matt. 5. 8. that Beatitude, *Bleſſed are the clean-hearted, for they ſhall ſee God.*

Now we ſay, this divine viſion cauſeth *a totall reſemblance of the ſoul with God*, following that ſen-
1 Joh. 3. 2. tence of S. *John*, *We know, that, when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him,*

him, because we shall see him as he
is; So that all that which the soul
is and hath, shall be like God by
participation. Here nothing at al can
be concealed from her, according
to our Saviours words; *In that day* Joh. 16. 23
you shall ask me nothing. Because
she eyes the clear glass of the God-
head, wherein her self and all things
are most plainly and perfectly con-
tained: But untill that day comes,
though the soul be perched never
so high, yet God is alwayes hid
from her in some manner, as far
forth as there wants in her som-
thing of this totall resemblance
with the Divinity.

Thus, (*ô amourous souls*), by
climbing this mysticall ladder of
divine love, upon which God him-
self leaneth, you get out of your
selves, and all things, and fly up in-
to the divine being: for love (like
fire) tends alwayes upwards, with a
perpetual desire to be plunged and
ingulphed in the Centre of its pro-
per Sphere. Apply your selves ther-
fore seriously to this holy and in-
ward exercise, that you may attain

to these heavenly effects: Embrace with open heart and arms, your good, great, and gracious Lord and love; and resolve with that holy Spouse, *I have laid hold on him, and*
Cant. 3. 4. *I will never leave him. Draw near*
Psal. 33. 6. this divine Sun *and be illuminated*; he will clear your darkness, errours, and ignorances; dissipate all your dulness in devotion, dry up the dirt of your concupiscences; encourage you in the carrying of your Cross, give you a general alacrity in the performance of all your actions and undertakings, and replenish your souls with unspeakable sweetnesses, comforts, and contents.

Come, I say, and only bring with you these three companions, *Faith, Love, and Resignation*, and leave all other things to the divine disposition. Represent to your thoughts, a wofull and bedridden creature, lying grievously tormented with a burning feaver; his Physician prescribing abstinence from drink, as the only and assured way for his cure and recovery; his compassionate friends visiting him, seeking to divert

divert his pains with their pleasant discourses, and to charm his disease with the delight of musick, &c. Ah! what unwellcome comforts are all these things to him, who can fix his mind on nothing but drink; who thinks on nothing, talks of nothing, demands nothing, desires nothing, delights in nothing, but only to refresh his ardours, quench his thirst, and asswage his tormenting heat? This is your case, (*O dear souls*) This should be the beginning, middle, and end, of your whole life and busines in this world: Nothing but *God, God, God*: Neither science nor ignorance, neither musick nor misery, neither delights nor desolations, should touch, trouble, or amuse, your *faithfull, loving*, and *resigned* hearts: *God* is your only aym and end, 1. To languish after *God*, 2. To seek *God*, 3. To fear the losing of *God*, 4. To suffer for *God*, 5. To be weary of delay, in your love to *God*, 6. To run lightly, confidently, & sweetly into *God*, 7. And Finally to enjoy *God*, and live *in God*, and with *God* eternally.



THE FIFTH TREATISE OF THE SPIRITVALL CONQUEST:

Containing

The choiceſt Maximes of Myſticall Divinity.

With Brief Inſtructions and Directions, neceſſary for thoſe Devout Souls which deſire, To walk in the way of Gods holy Spirit without error, To follow the Divine call without illuſion; and Arrive at holy Union without danger or difficulty.

Dilated With points of Practice, Affections, and Elevations.

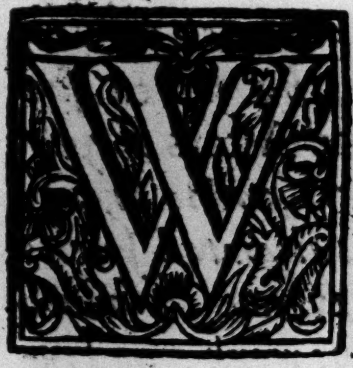
Galathians. 6. 16.

Whoſoever ſhall follow this Rule, peace be upon them.

AT PARIS, M.DC.LI.

42.
1.
16.

To the Devout Contemplatives, walking in the way of heavenly Love, and aſpiring to perfect Union with God.



E have hitherto conducted you, (O Dear and devout Souls), *out of the* E- Exod. 13.
gypt *of ſin and ſenſuality, through the* Red-Sea *of your dangerous conflicts and skirmiſhes, into the quiet* Deſert *of Divine Contemplation: We*

Deu. 32. 49 *have led you to the* top of the mountain Nebo, (*by the ſeveral laborious Steps of Perfection*), *from whence we ſhew'd you a ſmall glimpſe of the glorious* land of promiſe, *flowing with the ſweet* milk and hony *of heavenly Love and holy Vnion.*

Now laſtly, to ſettle you in your happy ſtation, to aſſiſt you in your high undertakings, to maintain your heroick fervor, to keep alive this ſacred fire burning on the Altars *of your inflamed hearts, and to ſtrengthen your thus elevated ſpirits with* Perſeverance (*which only crowns the work, and infallibly entitles you to childrens* portions, *in this divine* inheritance), *we have provided theſe enſuing* Maxims *of Myſtical Divinity, for your conti-*

nual

nual support and comfort.

We name them Maxims, *because they contain the generall grounds and granted* verities *of solid Devotion and sublime* Contemplation; *summ'd up, and set in some order, out of the larger elucubrations of the most illuminated Mystical writers: And we deliver them in a compendious and concise style, leaving many points rather insinuated than expressed; because our aym is only* truth, substance, and solidity, *which need no* word-ornaments *to make them amiable or intelligible; and we conceive they will be more easily admitted into your souls, better retained in your memories, and more efficaciously applied to your practices, being thus* nakedly, simply and briefly *propesed,*

than if they were cloathed and diſguiſed with any begg'd luſtre from abroad.

We look not that ſenſualiſts ſhould either read or ſavour them; for their doctrine is too divine, their poſitions too pure, their practice too perfect, their contents too contrary to the tenents of fleſh and blood: Vanity and verity *have little commerce together*; light and darkneſs *are oppoſites*; ſenſe *is at perpetuall odds with the* ſpirit, *and the greater part of worldlings (in this our corrupted age), are readier to mock at the holy practiſers of piety, than to reflect on their own* expreſs duty and obligation of tending to perfection.

Delicata eſt divina conſolatio, & non datur admittentibus alienum. Bernardus.

Nor can we promiſe them a heartier welcome amongſt ſome pretenders to ſpirituali-

ty:

ty: *for* self-love *hath obtained so great an Empire over most mens minds, that they generally judge of devotion according to their own gusts and fancies; they embrace Hypocondriacall shews and shadows for truths and substances; and believe* that *only to be good,* which *is agreeable to their humour and affection.*

Nemo ad veram contemplationem scandere valet nisi per scalam humilitatis. Read F. Cisne. ius. chap. 31. 32. 33. &c.

Some great Scholars *also, whose understandings are wholly busied in* drawing consequences from naturall reason, *will strive to discredit that point of our doctrine here delivered, (which denyes and forbids the use of* such acts *of our reason in this heavenly School* of higheſt Recollection), *Not duly considering the universally received principle of the Saints, That these two*

1. p. q. 85. a. 4.

1. p. q. 17. a. 4.

lights,

Greg. upon Ezechiel l. 1. ho. 17. *lights*, naturall and ſupernaturall, *can no more actuate the ſame underſtanding at one and the ſame time, than a body can have two different forms together: And that God who hath given us the* light of reaſon *for the increaſe of our naturall goods, knowledge, and perfection; hath ordained the* light of Faith, *(which is above all reaſon, and implies a negation and ceſſation of all the acts thereof) for the attaining of ſupernaturall gifts and graces: And it is the often inculcated* Maxim of S. Denys, *That to receive ſupernaturall benefits, we muſt relinquiſh* all acts of reaſon, *and quit all ſuch reſemblances and images of creatures, as* it *ordinarily makes uſe of, for the increaſe of* it's *naturall knowledge.*

Denys. c. 7. de divin. nomin. F. Garcias Ciſnerius. chap. 28.

So

So that it is moſt certain, that the ſoul which ayms at the pureſt, perfecteſt, and ſublimeſt Contemplation, muſt not only abandon all operations of her outward and inward ſenſes, but tranſcend all actings and workings of her underſtanding, and (as it were), blindly elevate her-ſelf to an un-explicable union with that object, which is above all naturall knowledge and conception: This is to be moved with Love alone, (ſupported by Faith), without glaſsing her ſelf in any creature, or ſtaying upon any thing, which is not the very Deity: This is to be ingulphed in divine darkneſs, and to be ſo loſt and abſorpt in God, that ſhe neither ſees, feels, nor finds her ſelf any where, but in the divine being: O happy loſs! O

hea-

heavenly darkneſs! O glorious annihilation!

Wherefore, drown your ſelves, (O divine Contemplatives) *in this Ocean; loſe your ſelves in this abyſs of the divinity; leave all that is materiall, ſenſible, intelligible, and look immediately upon the ſupernaturall object of your Faith; ſtay not in the lower exerciſes, and feeble diſcourſes of your imaginations, but permit your ſpirit to take it's free flight, as a Royal eagle, & perch upon the* increated verity: *Take courage in theſe your ſublime exerciſes, follow them faithfully, humbly, obediently, and perſeverantly, according to the rules and directions here preſcribed; and let the world ſlight you, which underſtands them*

them not; let greateſt Schoolmen condemn you, which experience them not; let fleſh and blood repine, which reliſh them not; let the Devil rage, who by this means findes you not, but where you are forth of his reach, and free from his ambuſhes; that is, in God, in whom only you live by continuall recollection, abnegation, abſtraction, introverſion, annihilation. This is to begin your heaven upon earth, and to fortaſt that endleſs felicity in which your faith *ſhall be turn'd into clear* viſion, *your* hope *changed into* full poſſeſſion, *and your* charity *knit to her* beloved centre and perfection; *where you ſhall* praiſe

God

God inceſſantly, love *him intirely*, *and* enjoy *him eternally*.

The

The Table of the Maxims.

1. *That our end is Perfection, and divine Union, and that Prayer is the way to it.*

2. *That Beginners may profitably make use of the following Exercise of mentall Prayer and Introversion, until they obtain greater light, and more experience in the way of the Spirit.*

3. *That of all internal Prayer, the affective is most noble, necessary and profitable.*

4. *That Meditation is a seeking, Contemplation a seeing of God.*

5. *That continual Recollection, is the Exercise of Exercises, and the immediate way to bring us to perfection and divine Vnion.*

The practice of this Exercise is declared in ten canons.

1. *That all places are proper for Recollection, but the more quiet the more proper.*

2. *That to pray on our knees, is a posture most pleasing to God.*

3. *That*

3. That we must (especially at first), prefix to our selves certain and set times of Recollection.

4. That we must frame an act of pure Intention, at our entrance into Recollection.

5. That we must briefly examine our Consciences, and produce acts of Contrition, self-confusion, humility, and resolutions of amendment.

6. That we must also make an Act of perfect Resignation, before we fall upon this Exercise.

7. That we must bring with us, some theam, subject or groundwork of our Prayer and Recollection.

8. That we must look on God by Faith, and leave off all discourses.

9. That we must carry God with us from our Prayer.

10. That we must put on Christ, and imitate his example in all our actions.

6. That for this pure, perfect, and Transcendent prayer, no certain Rules can be prescribed.

7. That the Contemplative must be very observant of the divine visits, lights, and calls. 8. That

8. That the only way to get true peace of mind, is to be totally resigned to God.

9. That a Contemplative soul, must lay a solid groundwork to serve her in time of desolation.

10. That in this high Exercise of Recollection, the three Theological vertues, Faith, Hope and Charity, must perfect and possess the three powers of our souls, Understanding, Memory, and Will.

11. That our Understandings must be setled in pure Faith.

12. That our Memories must be setled in pure Hope.

13. That our Wills must be setled in pure Charity.

14. That this Exercise of Recollection and Annihilation, is the short & secure way to divine Union.

15. That all sorts of people may safely addict themselves to this holy exercise of Recollection.

16. That outward Observances are helps, in the practice of this Exercise.

17. That Prayer for others is best practised by a general intention.

18. That

18. That all vertues are best practised by addicting our selves to Contemplation, or this internal Exercise of Recollection.

Some examples, for the practice of this divine way of Prayer.

Some further Advices, for the same practice of this pure prayer.

19. That corporal austerities, must be alwayes subject to obedience.

20. That Contemplatives must alwayes have the seven verities, (which concern the divine nature, whereupon all Contemplation is grounded), either habitually, or formally in their memories.

21. That Jaculatory Prayers, are the neerest dispositions to Contemplation.

22. That the Presence of God, is the great exercise of Contemplatives, and the shortest way to divine Vnion.

A more sublime way to practise the presence of God.

23. That Humiliation is a relique of Gods love.

24. That Humility is the solid groundwork of all spirituality.

25. That

25. *That Silence and Solitude, are our heaven upon earth.*

26. *That the perfect love of God, and hatred of our selves, must be our constant and continuall employment.*

27. *That Confidence in Gods goodness is the main support of our Spiritual Edifice.*

28. *That the measure of our progress in Perfection, is the Conformity of our will to the divine will.*

29. *That Vnquietness of mind is the bane of Devotion, and curse of Contemplation.*

30. *That Crosses are to be suffer'd, not sought; to be taken, not made; to be conceal'd, not complain'd of.*

31. *That Temptations cannot hurt us, if we cast our whole care upon God.*

32. *That Desolations, derelictions, afflictions, distractions, are to be transcended by generous Resolutions.*

33. *That Perfection consists in putting off all propriety, and putting on pure and naked charity.*

34. *That Zeal and eagerness must be temper'd with Moderation and discretion.* 35. That

35. That we must never rely upon our own naturall judgement, experience, and knowledge.

36. That we must seek no comfort in any creature.

37. That we must walk, and persever, in these our Spiritual Exercises, with the two feet of Faith and Obedience.

Vnder this Maxim are solved many materiall doubts arising in our daily progress to Perfection.

The first doubt.

If we fear that God will forsake us, by reason of our Ingratitude and disloyalty?

2. If our sins trouble us, in respect of Confession and satisfaction?

3. If we can neither pray with fervour, nor suffer with patience; neither feel God present, nor be content in his absence?

4. If we are doubtfull that God is angry with us, that we want grace, that we only seek our selves, that wa yield to all temptations? &c.

5. If our consciences are unquiet, and our souls fearfull by reason of our proness to sin? &c.

6. If

6. *If we are full of fears and apprehensions of our estate, by reason we feel in our souls, such slender effects of Gods grace and love, and have little devotion, no inward peace? &c.*

7. *If some extream cross, calamity, or affliction hath seiz'd our hearts? &c.*

8. *If we desire to conquer the Devil, and overcome all temptations whatsoever?*

9. *If we want comfort in long and dangerous temptations, and troubles?*

10. *If we wonder that God will have us suffer temptation, sithence our frailty is subject to yield, and so offend his divine Majesty?*

11. *If we are solicited by our enemy to unchastness?*

12. *If we are in extraordinary desolation and darkness?*

13. *If we are tempted to despair of Gods mercy, by reason of our frequent falls and rolapses into sin?*

14. *If we are perplexed with great sadness? &c.*

Other remedies against Sadness.

Ano-

Another antidote, against melancholy and pusillanimity.

15. *If we suspect, that our Sadness and temptations proceed from our own fault or negligence, or some secret sin, or our want of correspondency with Gods grace? &c.*

16. *If we doubt that God is displeased with our Prayers, that our afflictions befall us through our own occasion; and cannot satisfie our selves to think we have done what God requires?*

17. *If nature hath shew'd her self a Step-mother unto us, in giving us a hard and harsh disposition, whence proceeds a reluctancy to works of vertue, and mortification of vice: So that we distrust of ever overcoming our selves?*

18. *If on the contrary, Our nature is so facil and flexible, that we scarcely find difficulty in any thing: We wonder to hear mention of rebellions, contradictions, desolations, &c. From all which we are secure and quiet; And therefore we fear our actions proceed rather from a natural promptitude than solid vertue?*

19. *If*

19. *If we so addict our selves to Recollection, that we look upon works of Obedience, and the external practices of our duty, as impediments to Perfection?*

20. *If we find such a calm in our passions, imperfections, and temptations, that we hope the worst is past?*

21. *If scrupulosity overwhelms us? 1. We must obey our Spiritual Directour. 2. We must do our best endeavour.*

But here arise two difficulties.

1. *If our Directour's knowledge be small, his experience less? &c.*

2. *If we cannot satisfy our selves, that we have done our best? &c.*

22. *If we fear we detest not sin sufficiently, because we feel not so great sorrow for the offence of God, as we do sometimes for a temporall loss?*

23. *If we cannot ground our selves in a firm hope of mercy, for that we are so frail and inconstant;*

we sin dayly, and amend not our lives; we repay unto God evil for good; we promise fidelity, and practise nothing less?

24. If we go not on with alacrity, because we know not that our sins are forgiven, that our Confessions are good, and that we are in the state of grace?

25. Though we cannot (in this life) assure our selves infallibly to be in good state; yet if we could comfort our selves with most probable tokens of grace, whereby we might feel the pulses of our hearts, and somwhat ease our anguish?

26. If we are troubled because we know not well when we give consent to sinfull thoughts?

27. If we cannot well distinguish between Venial and Mortal sin?

28. If these sayings of Divines terrifie us: They sin, who do against their doubt: And, In doubtfull things the securer part is to be followed?

29. If finally, we are apprehensive

hensive and fearfull lest we should grow weary in the way of vertu, and not persevere constantly in our Spiritual Exercises.



Maxims of Mystical Divinity.

The first Maxim.

That our end is perfection and Divine Vnion; and That Prayer is the way to it.

IT is not sufficient for us, (*who are resolv'd upon a spiritual course*), to lead an ordinary good life, which consists in the avoiding of sin and scandal, and in the punctual performance of our external duty to God and our neighbour: But our end and aym must be to attain the perfection of Gods holy love, and a happy Vnion

of our ſouls with their firſt beginning, by living in abſtraction, recollection, and perpetuall Contemplation, as far forth as Gods holy Spirit ſhall enable us, and our frailty can correſpond.

The chief means to attain this our end, is *Prayer*, without which, all Religion is but a ſhadow without a body, or a body without a ſoul; and all outward obſervances will prove but a ſuperficial, not a real devotion. For it is the conſtant doctrine of Divines; *that what God in his eternal diſpoſition hath determined to beſtow upon us, he gives us in time, by the intervention of Prayer*: tying (as it were) to this inſtrument, the converſion of ſinners, the advancement of ſouls, the perfection of Saints, &c. So that as his divine decree is, that we muſt till the earth, if we will reap the fruits thereof, and provide materials, if we will raiſe up buildings, and the like; ſo his abſolute order is, that we muſt *pray* if we will have ſpiritual benefits to be powred into our ſouls, and ſupernatural

S. Auguſtine. S. Baſil. S. Chryſoſtom. S. Thomas. 2, 2. q. 83. a. 2.

gifts

gifts and graces to be granted unto us.

Let us therefore in the first place, resolve to prosecute Prayer, courageously, constantly, and perseverantly, at set times, if we intend to make speedy progress in sincere vertue, and lay a sure groundwork of solid spirituality; and let nothing, upon any pretext whatsoever, hinder or divert us from it as far as obedience and discretion will give us leave.



Lord, heal my *wounds*, ſupply my *wants*, ſatisfie my *wiſhes*.

The second Maxim.

That Beginners, may profitably make use of this following exercise of mental Prayer and Introversion, until they obtain greater light, and more experience in the way of the Spirit.

THis divine Exercise consists of three parts in general, and Nine points in particular.

1. Preparation of 3. acts
   1. An affective & lively apprehensiō of Gods presence.
   2. A cordial and profound act of humility.
   3. A pure intention to please and praise God only.

2. Consideration of
   1. My wounds, both internal and external.
   2. My wants, which are many in every degree.
   3. My wishes, and humble desires.

3. Conclusion also of 3. acts.
1. Contrition for my sins.
2. Resignation in my wants.
3. Complacence in God, and Confidence in his goodness.

A more ample and practical description of this Exercise.

The first part is Preparation, of three Acts.

1. *A lively apprehension of Gods Presence, not only in all places, and all creatures, by his power, and essence, but in our souls, by his mercy, love, care and providence.*

1. Part. 1 Presence of God.

O my Soul! Where are we? who seeth us? What is he that is with us, and within us? by whose light we see, by whose fire we burn, and by whose love we live? Live, *my most glorious and gracious Lord!* in whose presence I kneel, in whose arms I rest, and after whose love I breathe: O that thou wert as dear to my soul as thou art near it! Alas, why doth she not care as much for her God, as he doth for her

her good? Why do I not love thy presence, *ô my amiable Lord*, since thou art present by love?

Thou art my Father, my Physician, and my food, hear me, heal me, help me: I am wounded, I am wicked, I am wretched: Out of thee, there is no rest; without thee, there is no hope; remain with me, reign within me; Let me be thine, all thine, ever thine.

2. *Profound and cordial humility; acknowledging unfeignedly before God and his Angels, our wickedness, weakness, and wretchedness; what we are, and what we deserve, and so resting quiet in our Centre of nothing.*

2 Profound humility.

O my Soul! What have we been? What are we? What have we? what can we do? What do we deserve? What do we desire? What hath our loving Father and liberal Lord, that he hath not given us? What have we, proud and prodigal children, that we have not received meerly from his mercifull hand and heart? What have we received, that

we

we have not abuſed by *ſelf-love* or *ſelf-delight?*

O ſweet Jeſu! Give tears to my eyes, words to my tongue, ſighs to my heart, and love to my ſpirit; for I need them all to deplore my miſery, and implore thy mercy; to admire thy beauty, and adore thy bounty; to ſigh after thee, and ſuffer for thee: What I have been, it grieves me to remember; What I am, after ſo many ſignall benefits on thy part, and ſerious promiſes on mine, I am aſhamed to think; What I deſerve I am afraid to call to mind; What I deſire, I am ignorant how to ask. *Lord*, for thy mercies ſake, *for thy Mothers ſake*; by thy *Bowels* of mercy, and her *Breaſts* of meekneſs; by all that *thou* haſt ſuffer'd for me, and *ſhe* for thee; by all that is dear to thee in heaven and earth; forget and forgive what I have been, my paſt folly and wickedneſs; Pity and protect what I am, my preſent frailty and weakneſs; Be ſatisfi'd for what I deſerve, ſupply what I deſire, and be mindfull of me in life and death.

How

How much, *ô my God*, do I wish to leave all, and lose my self to find thee? to humble my self, to please thee? and to hate my self, to love thee? But these hard and high matters I dare scarcely promise, how then and when shall I practise them? Yet without thee, (*ô sacred humility!*) there is no solid centre to rest in, no true sweetness to take gust in: therefore, *ô my God*, I come to *thy School* to learn this *necessary lesson*, teach me, touch me, wound me, and win me unto thee.

3. *Pure intention, to please and praise God only: to be all his, ever his, in what manner and measure he best liketh, both in this prayer, and all things whatsoever.*

Behold therefore, *ô my Lord*, how out of pure *Obedience* to thy Will, and *confidence* in thy mercy, I now approach to please and praise thee: Not to receive great matters from thee, for I am unworthy; nor to conceive great matters of thee, for I am uncapable; but to leave all for thee, to be *humble of heart* beyond

3. Pure Intention.

yond all, and to love thee more than all; this is both conform to my condition and obligation. I come to prayer. (*O my only Lord and love*) not to have much, but to give up all, to be thine, all thine, ever thine, in life and death, for time and eternity, as thou best pleasest: I come, *O my centre and sweetness*, to seek thee and sigh after thee, yet I am content neither to find thee nor feel thee, but only to see thee *by faith*, and to suffer for thee *with fidelity*. I am satisfied and content that thou art so good, great, glorious, rich and happy in thy self: and I am confident that thou in thy good time wilt make me *rich* in thy *mercy*, and *happy* in thy *love*; for in this *Pilgrimage* I desire no other *happiness* than true *humility*, nor greater *riches* than *naked charity*.

The second part is Consideration: shewing these three things, first to our selves, and then to our God, as his poor beggers.

1. *Our wounds, both internal and external: to wit, our sins, ingratitudes, daily faylings, strong passions, &c.*

Ah! *my sick and sinfull soul!* how weak and wounded are we in every degree, in all parts, in each member of body, and faculty of mind? 1. All is out of order, all is pride and self-love: how impenitent are we in sorrowing? how impatient in suffering? how unconstant in persevering? and yet how importune in sinning? 2. My Vnderstanding is blind to good, clear-sighted to evil; My Will is perverse, peevish, cold, sensuall; My memory is weak, full of idle images, subject to distractions. 3. My affections are vain, my passions violent, my inclinations vitious. 4. My Faith is little, my Hope less, my Charity least of all. 5. So forward to *extroversion* and dissolution,

2. Part. 1. Our wounds.

on, so backward to *introversion* and compunction, so full of imperfections, and immortifications. 6. So little confidence in thy mercy, so little patience in my misery, and almost no performance of my good purposes. 7. So curious to censure others, so careless to keep myself and curb my own senses. Finally, all is self-love, self-will, self-conceit, self-seeking, pride, propriety, partiality, which are my dayly and dangerous diseases.

O Father of mercies, and only Physician of my soul! Thou art almighty, and all-bounty; these are my wounds and impurities, and if thou wilt, thou canst both cure and cleanse me; and if thou wilt not, I will remain content as I am: I am willing to continue weak, so I be not wicked; to be wearied and wounded, so I be not utterly tired, over-turned, defeated, and lose the victory: Cut, kill, crucifie, *ô Lord*, only spare me for eternity.

2. *Our wants, for we are not only needy, but naked; not only poor, but beggers; who neither know how to deserve an alms, nor how to desire it.*

O my poor soul! What do we want? nay what do we not want? 2. Our wants.
1. True light, true liberty, true love, true life. 2. A setled attention, a simple intention, a serious introversion, a sincere conversion. 3. Humility of heart, conformity of will, purity of soul, indifferency of spirit. 4. Wisdom to know Gods will, strength to execute it, patience to persever in it. 5. Resolution to suffer for our Saviour, devotion to sigh after him, diligence to find him, constancy to remain with him. 6. Courage to endure all, faith to forgo all, hope to expect all, charity to give all, and Confidence to gain all. Finally we want all we should have, Yet our loving Lord is ready to bestow on us all that he hath.

O my God and all! Thou art all that I want; give me thy self, and all my wants and wishes will be at an

an end. Thou art all my ſafety and my only ſecurity, all my refuge and my only centre; Vntil I can return unto thee, or wholly turn into thee, let thy *Croſs* be my *Purgatory*, and thy *will* be my *Paradiſe*, for other heaven upon earth I can never hope to find. Vntill then, I muſt be content to ſweat and ſigh under the burden of this mortal life, to ſit like *Job* upon a dunghil, forlorn and forſaken by all full of ſoars and ſorrows, to remain a perpetuall and pitifull patient, ſcarcely feeling patience in my ſelf, and finding no compaſſion in others.

3. *Our wiſhes and deſires. What can a wounded wretch wiſh, but to be cared for and cured? What can a naked begger deſire, but to be clothed and comforted with ſome few raggs and crumms? What can a blind and cold perſon ask, but light and love?*

3. Our wiſhes. This, *O my ſoveraign and ſweet Lord*, is the ſum and ſubſtance of all my wiſhes and requeſts. O that I could go out of my ſelf, and get into

to thee! That I were dissolv'd from my loathed body, to the end I might dilate my heart in thy love, contemplate thy divine face in perfect liberty, and please and praise thy Majesty eternally! For in this prison of flesh, and vale of tears, I faint under the weight of my temptations, I fall under the burden of my troubles, and I continually fail in the prosecution of my pious purposes.

Oh! that thy *will* did so rule me, and reign over me, that it were a torment to decline never so little from it! O that thy *love* did so freely and fully possess my heart, that there were no room at all remaining for any bastard or base love of things created!

Good Jesu! how truly happy and holy should I be, if I could clearly behold my own *nothing* in thy *all*; if I could embrace *crosses* as *crowns*, and swallow down all contempts and confusions, as milk and hony! O when shall I be so elevated in spirit above my self, by extasie of love, as to be able and willing to humble my self under all creatures

tures without repugnancy!

Alas! shall I never be content to forsake all, and be forsaken by all? Yea having lost and left *all for One*, to be left by that *One*, who is *my All*? and so remain quiet in my own *nothing*. How long shall I lie wallowing in flesh and blood? how long shall I delay and dally in false loves? How long shall I sigh and not enjoy! seek and not find! live and not love?

Come, *my Lord, and love! Lord Jesu*. come quickly: Let the fire of thy sweet *love* so consume in me all dross of *self-love*, and so transform my spirit into thee, that I may take all from thee *indifferently*, give all to thee *liberally*, and rest and repose in thee *eternally*.

Lord! let me be thine, or nothing! Love, or not live!

The third Part, is the Conclusion, which consists also of three Acts.

1. *Contrition, which is a hearty and humble sorrow for our sins, ingratitudes, disloyalties, tepiditie, &c.*

O my God! how little did I love thee when I so carelesly offended thy Majesty? Oh! that I had never sinned mortally, though it had cost me my life immediately! O that I were sure never more to swerve from thy sacred will and commandements! Let me henceforth endure, *dear Jesu*, a thousand deaths of my body, rather than admit one deadly sin again into my soul! O pity and pardon my past follies and frailties, and prevent me with thy gracious blessings against future fallings. 1. Contrition.

How great, *ô Lord*, is my obligation to serve and please thee, were it but for thy favours conferr'd, thy benefits bestow'd, and thy love powr'd out upon me? and yet, *ungrateful wretch that I am*, how poorly have I corresponded!

Oh! that I had so deep a sense of my sins, that my heart might break with sorrow? Hide not, *ô Lord*, thy face from me, shut not up thy mercy gates against me; for though I have most grievously gone astray, yet I am resolv'd upon an entire amendment, correction, reformation of

of my whole man: this *ſtrong reſolution*, (which is thy gracious gift) grounds my *hope* in thy *goodneſs*, emboldens my *confidence* in thy *mercy*, and gives me *courage* and comfort in thy *love*.

2. *Reſignation in all our wants, miſſes, deſolations, and diſtreſſes, to the divine will and pleaſure.*

2. Reſignation. I am indifferent, *O my dear Lord*, to ſickneſs and health, to light and darkneſs, to delight and deſolation: I am thine, (*ſweet Jeſu*)! put me where thou wilt, do with me as thou wilt, ſend me what thou wilt! I am content, not only to have nothing, but to be nothing, ſo thou, *O my Lord*, be all things unto me! I acknowledge my ſelf unworthy to beg, and leſs worthy to obtain, and therefore I reſign my ſelf ſtill to beg, and yet ſtill to want, even that which I moſt wiſh; which is all light, all liberty, all love, all comfort, all content, yea even all vertu, peace, and perfection, ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe thee! *O father*, I am thine, ever thine, all thine body and ſoul,

soul, for time and eternity. *Live Jesus: only!*

3. *Complacence and confidence; the first, that our God is what he is; the next, that he will heal our wounds, supply our wants, satisfie our wishes, and turn all to our good.*

3. Complacence, and Confidence.

I am glad, *o my glorious Lord God*, that thou art so worthy of all love, though I of all others am not worthy to love thee: I am as joyful for what thou art, *o great God*, as if all thou hast were all mine, and I will love thee in all I am and have, as being all thine. Thy *Cross* is my comfort, thy *Will* my well-fare, and thy *love* my life; so that if I can but *suffer* for thee, *do thy will*, and *follow thy love*, I shall do all that is necessary.

I am indeed dry, dark, and desolate, but since it is thy will I am sure it is my good, and therefore sufficient for me, and satisfactory to thee. I hope thou wilt one day compleat thy own heavenly design in my soul, healing my wounds, supplying my wants, fulfilling my desires, and filling

filling my yet empty heart with thy ſweet preſence and perfect love: In the mean ſpace I will ſay and ſing; *Live Jeſus, Live my Lord, my love, my life, my all! whoſe name be bleſſed by all, whoſe will be accompliſhed in all, whoſe honour be advanced above all.*

An advertiſement, touching the precedent Exerciſe.

1. We muſt perform it dayly, diligently, diſcreetly, and with great confidence and courage: 2. Yet without propriety, that it may neither hinder the operation of the Holy Ghoſt within, nor works of due obligation and obedience without. 3. If in the practiſe of this *introverſion*, we find dryneſs, and feel little devotion: we may ſomtimes fitly reſume (in lieu of the ſecond part, or conſideration), our wonted exerciſes, whereto our minds are more addicted; ending the ſame with the Concluſion here preſcribed, being ever duly diſpoſed to follow the holy Spirits invitation to higher matters.

If

If we faithfully observe these things, we shall infallibly receive comfort, and speedily perceive our own unspeakable profit and progress by the practise of this pious exercise, as being indeed the end of all other externall devotions, and the short, sure, simple, and *Regia via*, leading to a spirituall, devout, and divine life.

The third Maxim.

That of all internal Prayer, the affective is most noble, necessary, and profitable.

FOr the end and drift of all discoursive Prayer, is, to move, inflame, and enkindle our affections in the love of God and vertue; and therefore all discourses must be left by little and little, as our souls can more and more *live in Faith*, and simplifie themselves from materiall objects, images, and conceptions; and only tend to God by a sweet and secret *motion of the will*, & an amourous correspondency to the Di-

vine operations, and inward impulses of his holy Spirit; treading down, and transcending all things under God, by discreetly forgetting and unknowing them.

The fourth Maxim.

That Meditation is a seeking, Contemplation a seeing of God.

PRayer in generall, (according to the known division) is either Vocall or Mentall.

As is more amply declared in our Introduction to the Spiritual Pilgrimage.

Mentall Prayer, is, *An Elevation of our spirits into God*: For as our Creatour is elevated above all creatures, so our souls cannot see, talk, and treat with him, purely, and perfectly, but by leaving them all, and lifting up themselves above them all.

This *Elevation* is by means of Meditation, Contemplation, Thanksgiving, and Petition: Which are the wings by which our soul flyes to God, and the four essentiall parts of prayer: all others, (as Preparation, lecture, examen, oblation, points,

4. Essentiall parts of Prayer. S. Tho. 2. 2. q. 83. a. 7.

points, conclusion, and the like), being only accidents, and properties thereof.

The difference between Meditation and Contemplation, is this,

We *Meditate*, when we seek after truths, and cast about for reasons to affectionate our wills to the embracing of Gods love, Christian vertues, or works of piety and perfection: For our *Understandings* are (as it were) the Steels, and our *Wills* the Flints, which no sooner touch each other, but the sparks of holy affections presently fly out, inflaming and actuating our disposed souls with heavenly love. The difference between Meditation, and

We *Contemplate* when we steadily and unmoveably behold God by *Faith*, believing that we have him truly with us, and within us; and so leaving all other subjects, objects, reasons and discourses, to look on him as present, love him in silence, and feed on his only satiating sweetness. Contemplation.

And this Coutemplation is either

ther Ordinary, or Perfect, or Transcendent.

Contemplation is threefold. 1. Ordinary. S. *Tho. in.* 3. *dist.* 32.

Ordinary Contemplation, is when our souls make use of their imagination, and such Species, as they have drawn from sensible objects, (first purifi'd, subtiliz'd, and immaterializ'd by the Vnderstanding), to conduct them to their Creatour.

2. Perfect.

Perfect Contemplation, looks directly upon the increated light, fixes her view upon the eternall verity, and perches immediately upon the divine being and perfections, without any admixture of fancy, or assistance of creatures. This is call'd dark Contemplation, because our souls discharged from all inferiour objects, and receiving no enlightnings from below, are wholly daz'led, and (as it were) blinded with the bright splendour of Gods incomprehensible Majesty, framing no sensible Idea of him, but beholding him with the eys of faith by way of *Negation*, and simple *adhesion* to his divine Essence.

3. Transcendent.

Transcendent Contemplation, mounts

mounts up yet higher above all intelligible species, and may fitly be term'd the Cousin german of beatificall vision, and that last heaven whereunto S. *Paul* was rap't, where not only all use of Sense is extinguisht, and all acting of Vnderstanding abolish't; but the spirit is totally transported, absorpt and inflam'd with Seraphical love; and the whole inward man is drown'd, annihilated, extasi'd, and ineffably united to the Divinity: so that the thus elevated soul can neither say or consider, *God is with me* or, *I am with God*; for such advertency or reflexion is sensible; whereas this most eminent Contemplation, imports an absolute silence and forgetfulness of our selves, and all things whatsoever, and an intire conjunction with our Creatour, as shall be hereafter further declared.

The Practise of the four essential parts of prayer; is in this, or the like manner. The 4. parts of Prayer, exemplifi'd,

Taking some mystery of our Saviours life, (as for example, his

As is shewed in the following Maxim.

praying in the garden of *Gethsemani*), for our subject or groundwork; we first *examine our consciences*, ask pardon for our sins, and make resolutions of amendment. Secondly, we *give up our wills* irrevocably to God, seeking purely his glory, and not our own gust, &c. Then we enter upon the first essentiall part of Prayer, which is,

1. Meditation.

Meditation; considering our dear Redeemer in his bloody sweat, sighing, weeping, praying, and his disciples sleeping; Vpon this sad spectacle we make some discourses, concerning the person that suffers, the love wherewith he suffers, the subject for which he suffers.

2. Contemplation.

Then our affections being moved by these considerations, and inflamed in Gods love, we slide sweetly and insensibly into active Contemplation; leaving all discourses, and looking (with our eyes of Faith) upon our suffering Lord.

3. Thanksgiving.

And having melted away in his loving presence, for so long time as our Devotion, or the holy Spirits invitation lasts; we heartily thank him,

him for having thus suffer'd for our salvation.

And lastly, we implore his grace, 4. Petition that we may faithfully follow his steps; and above all, that he will grant us his love; which we must filially, affectionatly, humbly, and confidently beg at the conclusion of all our exercises.

The fifth Maxim.

That continual Recollection, is the Exercise of Exercises, and the immediate way to bring us to Perfection and divine Union.

THat we may rightly conceive the verity of this Maxim; let us here in the first place take a view of the whole manner, meaning, method and practice of this sublime exercise, in these ensuing Canons.

1. *That all places are proper for Recollection, but the more quiet the more proper.*

Wheresoever we live, we may and should send up our Petitions, and

breathe forth our affections to our *every where present Lord and lover*, in publick and in private, in tempests and in calms, amidst all noises of employments, and in quiet corners of retreat: *Job* prayed well on a dunghill, and *Jonas* in the *Whales* belly. but *Judas* did not so in his Apostleship, and society of Jesus. Yet when solitude, silence, and repose may be obtained, *they are the fittest instruments of Contemplation*, and therefore most highly to be prized, and most diligently embraced: *I will lead him into the desert*, (says our Lord), *and there I will speak to his heart.*

2, 2. q. 188. a. 8.

Ose. 2. 14.

2. *That to pray on our knees, is a posture most pleasing to God.*

Let us not hunt for excuses, pretend want of forces, nor cloak our laziness and languour, with that misinterpreted Maxim; *That Prayer must have the quietest, easiest, and least constrained composition of body:* but rather let us imitate our Lord & Saviour, (since all his actions are our instructions), whose humanity lay

lay often *prostrate on the earth*, praying, and adoring his divinity; and let us follow the example of his Apostle, who frequently *bended his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Let us, I say, submit willingly to this direction, unless evident weaknes or infirmity hinder us, (for this adoration, and a far higher, is due to the divine Majesty), and therefore let us conceive the contrary to be a manifest temptation of our enemy. Matt. 26. 39. Mark 14. 35. Ephes. 3. 14.

3. *That we must (especially at first), prefix to our selves certain and set times of Recollection.*

Let us not complain for want of conveniency, time, or opportunity to follow this exercise; for if our wills be ready, time cannot be wanting: If our stomacks call on us for meat, or our bodies for warmth, we can find time to feed and clothe them: are our souls less considerable? Let us rather steal time from our sleep and recreation, than want it for Recollection: And since all our time is given us by God, to be spent

in his love and ſervice; let us re-give unto him at leaſt the tithe thereof, and dedicate two hours, of four and twenty, (one in the morning, and the other in the evening) to his particular honour.

4. *That we muſt frame an act of pure Intention, at our entrance into Recollection*: as thus,

I intend, *ô my God*, to employ each moment of the ſhort time I ſhall remain in thy preſence, in adoring thy Majeſty, admiring thy goodneſs, begging thy pardon for my offences, thy mercy for the ſouls in Purgatory, thy ſuccour for the Churches neceſſities, thy aſſiſtance in ſuch an extremity, thy ſtrength againſt ſuch an inclination, thy grace for the getting ſuch a vertue: I am here on my knees, (*ô Lord*) to perform theſe homages, and preſent theſe petitions.

This Intention will virtually endure the whole time of prayer, and make our ſeeming idleneſs, and ſtilneſs, active and meritorious.

5. *That*

5. *That we must briefly examine our Consciences, and produce acts of Contrition, self-confusion, humility, and resolutions of amendment;*

Saying from the very bottom of our hearts, in this or the like manner: *O my Lord, my God, my all!* thou deservest all praise, honour and service, because thou art good, gracious and glorious: I will henceforth rather lose all, than leave thee (*ô my God*), without whom all is nothing: and since thou art so good in thy self, and so good to me, I will (by thy grace) never more offend thee: I will confess my sins, amend my life, perform my penance, walk carefully, humbly, obediently, resignedly in thy presence: to all which I am principally moved by the infinite greatness, beauty, and bounty of thine own divine being, and perfection.

In the particular examen of our consciences, (which must never be omitted in the beginning of our Recollection), we must mark to what vice we are most inclin'd, and wherin we

Read the Spir. Conſl. c. 7. n. 14.

we are moſt frail, and then trample that down, violently and reſolutely: for this *Captain-imperfection* being conquered, the reſt will ſoon yield and ſubmit: And in the next examen, we muſt impartially ſearch and cenſure our ſelves, and ſee whether our falls in that kind, are ſtill as frequent as they were formerly: and ſo ſet upon our enemy again with freſh fervour, vigour, courage: and conſtancy, till we have gotten the compleat victory.

6. That we muſt alſo make an Act of perfect Reſignation, before we fall upon this Exerciſe,

Leaving our ſelves intirely in Gods hands: He is our *father*, let him diſpoſe of his *children*, and all that concerns them as he beſt pleaſeth, ſaying:

O my Lord, my father, my lover! do with my life, my health, my temporals, my ſpirituals, my body, my ſoul, *all*, *all*, as thou wilt: I come not hither, to receive my own content, but to learn how to conform me to thy will in all things, and

to

to remain in that very state, (neither more, nor less, nor otherwise) which best pleaseth thy divine Majesty.

7. *That we must bring with us, some theam, subject or groundwork of our Prayer and Recollection,*

As some mystery of our Saviours life, death, Passion; mans last ends; some vice to be conquered; some vertue to be attained: some divine perfection to be admired; or some jaculatory sentence to be so long stayed on, and chewed, till our souls feel themselves inclined to quit all discoursing and acting, and to remain quiet in an exercise of pure Faith and perfect Resignation, as followeth.

8. *That we must look on God by Faith, and leave off all discourse,*

When lively conceiving *by Faith*, that our Lord is in us, and in all things, we humbly beg him to teach us the holy *lesson of divine love*: and so keeping our selves in his presence, *bidding good night* to all creatures, objects, and images whatsoever, (as

at

at this time nothing concerning us), we only and immediately *eye the beloved object of our ſouls*, and reſt quietly, contentedly, ſilently, and ſweetly abſorpt into the Divinity.

9. *That we muſt carry God with us from our Prayer.*

Let us not leave our *dear Lord* in the Oratory, when we riſe from Recollection; but bear him along with us continually in our hearts; talking ſtill with him, and of him; eating and drinking in his company; ſleeping with him in our arms; negotiating, walking, recreating, doing all things with him, in him, for him, and ever praying and prayſing him whom we have with us, and within us in the cloſet of our ſouls.

10. *That we muſt put on Chriſt, and imitate his example in all our actions.*

Our Saviour Chriſt is our Maſter, let his life therefore be our model, and his practiſes the patterns which we always ſtudy to expreſs

expresse and imitate: Let us comport our selves in eating, drinking, sleeping, speaking, praying, and doing all things, as we conceive Christ did, or would do upon the like occasions, if he were now living upon earth in his humanity: Let us study to have this Rule of three alwayes at our fingers ends. 1. *To think as Jesus did.* 2. *To speak as Jesus did.* 3. *To do as Jesus did*: So striving to become (as it were) *a Jesus Christ* by imitation.

Thus briefly we have the whole manner and method of this *transcendent Prayer*, and divine exercise of Recollection: (to wit, (1.) To get into our retreat, (2.) and there placing our selves on our knees, (3.) Twice every day, (4.) to frame an act of pure Intention, (5.) To examin our consciences, and produce acts of Contrition, (6.) and Resignation, Then to (7.) think on the subject of our prayer, (8.) Leave off all discourses, and look on God by faith, (9.) Carry God with us from prayer, and (10.) lastly, put on Christ by imitation.)

Which

Which is the ſhort and ſecure way to divine union and Deiformity, being faithfully performed, diſcreetly practiſed, and carefully accompanied with *profound humility*, *perfect obedience*, and an *abſolute ſubmiſſion to our ſpiritual director*, as ſhall be more fully deduced in the ſubſequent Maxims.

The ſixth Maxim.

That for this pure, perfect, and Tranſcendent prayer, no certain Rules can be preſcribed.

THe ground of all Prayer, even pureſt, is (as hath been ſaid) ſome myſtery, ſome devout ſentence, ſome vertu, or ſome jaculatory dart, *&c.* untill our affection be moved. Now if by continuall *Introverſion* and *peculiar grace*, our Wils are drawn incontinently by the ſimple view of our beloved Lord, it is needleſs to uſe this ordinary means.

When our affections are thus enkindled

enkindled, they break forth into flames of love and aspirations. Then the heat increasing, our Prayer grows more inward, our sighs deeper, our love greater, our hearts more ardent in their desires of Union, which is *active Contemplation*: Wherewith our souls being overcome and drowned *in their lovers presence*, leave him to speak, move, act all things with us and within us, and so we sleep in *passive Contemplation*, freed from all objects of creatures, and sweetly united by pure love to our Creator.

The degrees therefore of Prayer in generall are these.

The degrees of Prayer, in generall.

1. Devout reading or mix'd Prayer.
2. Vocall Prayer.
3. Meditation or consideration.
4. When the affection is excited, Vocall aspirations.
5. The heat and light encreasing, mix'd (partly Vocall, partly Mentall) affections.
6. Then

6. Then more ſtill, abſtract, and ſimple Prayer;

7. After which, come's Active Contemplation.

8. And laſtly Paſſive:

In which eſtate, we may and muſt leave all Rules, and help our ſelves by experience, and the *light of faith*; but eſpecially by following and humbly obeying the internall motion and attraction of the holy Spirit of God, upon whom chiefly depends the perfection of this great work. For further explication whereof,

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The ſeventh Maxim.

That the Contemplative muſt be very obſervant of the divine viſits, lights, and calls.

We muſt ty our ſelves to no ſet methods,

WE muſt take heed of tying our ſelves to any ſet forms of words, points, or methods of Mental prayer, after we have made ſome progreſs in this practice of Recollection; for this were directly to impede the free operation of Gods

Gods holy Spirit within us: When therefore we shall perceive our souls drawn from *discourses* to this *higher exercise*, we must humbly and readily relinquish our former hold, and give scope and leave to the divine invitation; busying our selves no longer in our former fears and customs, but making use of such inward or outward expressions as *fervent love* will suggest and furnish us withall; conforming our selves perfectly to God's will, and cooperating with his grace: yet so, as not to run before it, which is the other extream equally hindring the divine Spirit's intention. Wherfore a quiet, indifferent, and industrious attention and correspondency (*still willingly giving way to Obedience, for fear of delusion.*) is the very best disposition to receive these heavenly visitations.

We must not then be troubled, if we break our old customs to embrace Gods will: he is the *end* of all our exercises, and the *end* being obtained, the *means* must cease. O how many are called by God

But willingly quit our old customs.

God, who refuſe and reſiſt him, by tying their Spirits to this or that practice, and ſo bar him from elevating their ſouls to himſelf as he pleaſeth. They are loath *to leave God* in their uſuall Devotions *for God* in Contemplation: If they begin not their prayers *thus*, and *thus* end them, they think they have done nothing, and remain wholly unſatisfied. Thus they become proprietarians in their Wils, and ſlaves to their exerciſes: and becauſe they caſt not themſelves abſolutely into the *two arms of Gods will and love*, they make ſmall progreſſe in the way of ſolid perfection.

The eighth Maxim.

That the only way to get true peace of mind, is to be totally Reſigned to God.

What Reſignation is.

REſignation, *is a putting away of our own Will, and a placing of Gods Will in its ſtead*: it is (as it were) a certain tranſfuſion of our Wills

Wills into his; and an uncloathing our selves of all desires, but only that God's holy Will be fully accomplish'd in heaven and earth.

Without this Resignation, we shall never find quiet in God nor our-selves; and the way to attain to it, is, to receive all that happens, as from Gods holy hands, and to be content to bear it as long, and in what manner, and measure he pleaseth: Let us not be troubled (under a false pretence of zeal) at this place, that company, *&c.* For it is not *that*, but *our selves* who stand in our own light. There is no true quiet without it.

First then, let us *seek* God purely *in all.* 2. *See* him present *in all.* 3. *Take* from him *all.* 4. *Return* to him *all.* Let us be indifferent in all; praise God in all; bee quiet and content in all; in sickness and health; in light and darkness; in peace and trouble; in life and death: To be expell'd out of Paradise with *Adam*; to lye full of sores and sorrows with *Job* on a dunghil; to be forsaken by all with *Christ* on the *crosse*; to bee poor, needy, naked,

naked, nothing; being ever ready to say cordially cheerfully, and with an humble and habituall indifferency, *Yes, O Father, yes, I will; It pleaseth thee, it shall please me; well, good, best of all: So be it, my good Lord, for time and eternity, in this and in all things.*

A soul thus resigned, can never be troubled with any cross or calamity, for she eys Gods Will and embraces his Providence in all occurrences; nothing toucheth her, but only that his divine pleasure is not perfectly performed in her self and in all creatures.

How to be resigned in desolations.

If in her prayers, she be seiz'd with *dryness*, dulness, desolation, shee gratefully confesseth *that* state to be best for the perfecting of her spirit: She neither complains of, nor considers her *unproficiency* in her pious exercises; for she comes not to prayer for gusts or graces, but to doe Gods will, to receive what he pleaseth, to suffer what he permitteth.

And because *this Resignation* is the Key of her true progress, she makes

makes frequent and fervent acts thereof in this or the like manner.

Take my Will totally to thee, O my God! govern it absolutely, and submit it perfectly to thine own: and because I cannot deliver it up, O my dear Lord, as thou desirest, take it from me by violence, cut off all impediments, break all my fetters for me, bring me forcibly, and bend me absolutely to a blessed conformity with thy Will and pleasure. Acts of Resignation.

Let my whole employment in this life, be the practice of this point; Let me neither think of pain, nor look upon recompense; but resignedly behold thee, because thou art in thy self so good, so great, so glorious, so amiable, so admirable.

I give up my Will, O divine Artist, *to bee plung'd, purified, polished, hammer'd, filed and fired in the fornace of thy love; O doe with it, and with me, as thou best knowest and pleasest: 'Tis for this I now come to prayer, and for this only; that I may be taught this happy lesson of denying mine own, and doing thy Will.* Or thus briefly;

Lord!

Lord! *I put my Will (and all that concerns me, inwardly outwardly, temporally, eternally,) into thy holy hands; dispose of all as thou pleasest, and direct me in all to doe thy divine Will.*

Having made this *act* and *oblation*, let us reflect seriously upon what we have said and done; and that in giving away our Will, wee have put the best pawn wee have into Gods hands, and out of our own power: let us then beware of so infamous and ignoble an action, as to re-take the gift so solemnly delivered, or to doe again our own *wil* in any thing whatsoever.

The ninth Maxim.

That a Contemplative soul, must lay a solid groundwork to serve her in time of Desolation.

FOr no soul can in this life be alwaies elevated to the Divinity, and therefore will sometimes need a stay to rest upon, till she can take breath, and repair her forces in

in order to her higher soarings in Contemplation. This resting place, may most fitly be *the Humanity of Christ*, which is the very *way and door* to the Divinity; upon which (when she returns to her self after she hath been absorpt into the divine light,) shee may confidently rely and repose: And without this prop, the higher shee ascends, the lower will be her fall back again.

This ground-work, may be Christs humanity.

The tenth Maxim.

That in this high Exercise of Recollection, the three Theological vertues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, must perfect and possess the three powers of our souls, Understanding, Memory, and Will.

IT is, in the first place to be observ'd, (as an undoubted truth) that a soul cannot (in this life) bee united to God immediatly by her understanding, memory, will, imagination, or any other sense, power, or faculty whatsoever; but only by the means of *Faith in her Understanding*,

ſtanding, by Hope in her Memory, and by Love in her Will.

Read F. *Ciſnerius.* ch. 65.

Theſe three vertues muſt therefore be introduced, (by our cooperation with the divine grace) into the ſaid three powers of our ſouls, in the pureſt and perfectest manner that is poſſible, if we will arrive at the height of divine Union. 1. *Faith*, muſt ſo poſſeſs our Underſtanding, as to deprive it (for that preſent) of all other knowledge than that of God only. 2. *Hope*, muſt blot out of our memory all images, and thoughts of poſſeſſing any thing, but God only. 3. *Charity*, muſt uncloath our Wills of all affections, joys, contents, ſatisfactions in any thing, that is not God only: For *Faith*, tels us of things which cannot be underſtood by naturall light and reaſon; *Hope*, looks upon ſuch things as we have not, hold not, poſſeſſe not; and *Charity*, retires our love from all creatures, to employ it all, on our Creator.

The *three powers* therfore of our *ſoul*, muſt bee perfected by theſe *three vertues*; our *Underſtandings*, muſt

must bee informed with this *pure Faith*; our *Memories* uncloath'd of all possession by this *pure Hope*; and our *Wils* fill'd with divine affections by this *pure Charity*; Thus refusing, denying, and emptying our whole souls, of all that is not this perfect *Faith, hope, and charity.*

In this divine practice is found an absolute assurance against all the subtle snares of the devill and self-love; for a soul which is thus entirely denuded and stripp'd of all *active knowledge, possession, and love of things created*, must needs remain in God, in a certain tranquillity, passiveness, cessation, sleep, annihilation, absorption: so that there can nothing be found out of God, for Satan, sin, or sensuality to attempt against.

But to facilitate the intelligence and practice of this high matter, (upon which foundation stands the whole edifice of this holy Recollection and divine Union) let us particularly deduce and exemplify, how the *Understanding* is to bee placed in pure *faith*, the *Memory*,

in pure *hope*, and the *Will* in pure *charity*.

The eleventh Maxim.

That our Vnderſtandings muſt be ſetled in pure Faith.

F. *Ciſneri-us* ch. 28.

THe practice of this point, is thus: Having conceived ſome myſtery of our Saviours Paſſion, or the like, for the ſubject of our prayer; we ruminate a while upon it, not ſo much to admire our Lord Jeſus, as imitate him; and we deſire to know his vertues, that wee may practiſe them in our own particular, by his perfect example.

An act of Faith.

Then we make an *Act of Faith*, ſaying; *I firmly beleeve that this my ſuffering Saviour, is not only a man, but alſo my Soveraign Lord God: I beleeve that he being Almighty, ſubmitted himſelf to Pilat, being the creator became a creature, being immortal became mortal; and that in as much as he is God, he is with me, within me, without me, about me, above me, beneath*

neath me, and so in all creatures which have a being.

Afterwards, we speak further to our Saviour; *O my dearest Lord and lover*, Teach me now my lesson, that in requitall of what thou hast done for me, I may keep thee company in thy sufferings.

And then we quit all discourses, thinking we have *no understanding at all left*, and looking on our sweet Saviour only by *Faith*, which hath this property (*says* S. *Thomas*) to elevate the soul to God, and free it from all creatures: For so long as there are discourses in our Understanding, images in our Memory, joys or tenderness in our Will, these powers have not *pure God* but sensible things for their object; because *God* being above all sensibility, must bee found without all creatures; and consequently if we can be totally abstracted from all things created, we shall infallibly lay hold on our *Creator*. S. *Tho.* of *Aquin.*

'Tis therefore impossible (*say's the divine* S. *Denys*) to be truly united to God unless we leave all Sr. *Denys.*

materiall operations, both in ſenſe and in ſpirit; that is. unleſſe wee lay aſide all ſenſes, all diſcourſes, all imaginations, and all waies of humane wiſdome: Till wee can doe this, let us not think to become *perfect Contemplatives.*

The twelfth Maxim.

That our Memories muſt bee ſetled in pure Hope.

WHich is done by forgetting all things created, heaven, earth, our ſelves, all; & being wholly taken up with God, and abſorpt in the Divinity. So that by a ſimple remembrance that we are with God, (without looking back to reiterate the ſame reflexion) we repoſe and ſlumber ſweetly in him; ſtaying upon no image whatſoever even of our Saviour himſelf; for as he, (in as much as
Joh. 14. 6. concerns his humanity), *call'd himſelf the way*; ſo he thereby inſinuated, that we were not to remain in the *way*, but to march on to our *ways end*, which is his Divinity.

No

No mervail then, if we find in the prescripts of mysticall Divines this doctrine; *That to arrive at the height of Contemplation, we must leave off all sort of Meditation, though it be on the life and death of our Lord and Saviour*; because in all Meditation, there is ever something that is sensible, to which nature applying it self, hinders our souls from soaring up to the fineness and quintessence of Contemplation, which is (and can be) only a pure, spirituall, and insensible thing. The doctrine of mystical Divines explicated.

'Tis true, that the consideration of the life and death of our loving Saviour, is a most powerfull means to mount up to this contemplation of his Divinity; but let us not make that the end, which is but the means and way to it.

The thirteenth Maxim.

That our Wills must be setled in pure Charity.

THis is done, by withdrawing it from all sort of Joy proceeding from any *natural*, *supernatural*, or *moral good.*

How all Joy is to be quitted

Joy, is a certain content which our wils take in somthing we prize; and this Joy is either *Active*, when we may leave it; or *Passive*, when it is not in our power to quit it.

Now, to *take Joy* and content in naturall goods, as, health, wealth, friends, &c. Or, wit, sagacity, discretion, &c. Is a plain vanity.

To *joy* in moral goods, as in the exercise of vertue, &c. Is to imitate the *Pagan* Philosophers, who lov'd vertue for vertu's sake; and made that *their end*, which is only *our way* to it.

Supernaturall goods, are either the gratuite gifts of God, as the working of miracles, &c. And we must uncloath our wills from any

Joy

Joy proceeding from these prerogatives, since they may be conferred upon reprobates: Or they are such goods as have relation to sanctifying grace, as *Faith*, &c. Which if they are not accompanied with perfect Charity and final Perseverance, are nothing worth; and nothing, can be no true subject of *joy*.

We may here take notice, how little reason some persons have to be troubled, because they have not these extraordinary gifts; when as they may be rather impediments, (if ill used, or over-much adher'd unto) than helps to divine Union: For (*says S. Denys*), all these things are not God, but only some effects of his favour, ordered by his providence to indear us in his love. S. Denys.

Thus the three powers of our souls, *Understanding*, *Memory*, and *Will*, are to follow their three objects, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*: Now our Lord is our loving Master, to whom we must have continual recourse, and who seeing our longing desires and diligent indeavours, will infallibly instruct us in the par-

ticular and unexplicable ways of this divine and perfect Contemplation.

The fourteenth Maxim.

That this Exercise of Recollection and Annihilation, is the short and secure way to divine Vnion.

FOr a soul which is truly humbled and annihilated, hinders not at all Gods holy operation within her, but leaves her self in his hands (not at all relying upon any discourse or imagination which is coined in her own mint), as a child in his mothers arms, who corrects it, cherishes it, washes it, and orders it, as she pleaseth: And must not this needs be the shortest, neerest, surest and most proportionate way to divine Vnion? For before God created us, we were either nothing at all; or we were in *Gods Ideal being*; and so were God himself, because *all that is in God is God*; now his divine Majesty gave us our present *being*, and we losing

F. *Ciserius* ch. 29.

our

our selves, because we abused this our *being*, have no better way to regain our selves than by a *no-being*; that so we may come to *be* that which we are not, by denying that *being* which we are. *O secure annihilation! What can hurt that which is nothing?*

If we thus leave our selves *willless*, *self-less*, *being-less*, we sodainly become plunged into the increated *being* of God, and living in him only by *Faith*, *Hope*, *and Love*, our enemy (as is already said) finds nothing to lay hold on, because our annihilated souls are no where but *in God*, where they are securely covered and protected under his wings; and who is obliged, (if we may say it), to be our *bulwark of defence*, against all assaults of our enemies.

The fifteenteth Maxim.

That all ſorts of people may ſafely addict themſelves to this holy exerciſe of Recollection.

'Tis true, that this way of Prayer is delicate and ſlippery, for Beginners to tread in. Yet if they will *faithfully* obſerve thoſe few neceſſary precautions here preſcribed, they will find (to their unſpeakable comfort), *that* moſt true in themſelves, *which* experience hath proved to be true in others: who though deeply ingaged in worldly vanities and affections, falling ſeriouſly, reſolutely, couragiouſly and humbly, upon Divine Contemplation and Recollection, became, (after ſome time employed in purging their ſouls from ſin, and ſetling themſelves in vertue, according to counſell and obedience), quickly, truly, and totally changed; and were conducted, (as it were by a nearer cut), without pains and tediouſneſs, to higher perfection, than by the ordi-

F. *Ciſnerius* ch. 22.

nary

nary wayes of discoursive meditation they could in long time have attained.

For this is most certain, *That God denies not his grace to them, who do what lyes in their own power.* Now any one of us (being assisted with Gods grace, and a good will), may do this which follows: 1. We may purge our souls from sin, by Confession, contrition, satisfaction; the means ordained by God and his Church. 2. Resigne and give up our selves, and all that we have, are, and can, to Gods Divine Majesty. 3. Adore him in spirit and truth, and present our selves before him, as his poor, needy, naked creatures. 4. Abstract our Vnderstandings, Memories, and Wills, from all objects and images of creatures, though never so good, high, and holy. 5. Enter into the *obscurity of Faith, hope, and love*, and leave our souls, as it were, sleeping and swallowed up in the abysses of the Divinity. *Finally*, all we have to do, is briefly this; *We must leave our houses empty, that our Lord and lover may take full*

If we use our endeavors, God always gives us his grace.

full poſſeſſion: and then we may aſſure our ſelves, that at the very inſtant, in which our dear Lord ſhall find our hearts vacant, he will enter preſently into them, inhabit them, inſtruct them, and *ſhew them how ſweet he is to thoſe ſouls, which truly ſeek him.*

Lam. §. 25.

Let us but perſever conſtantly, and couragiouſly, in this *pious practice*, and we ſhall ſoon perceive our unſpeakable profit and progreſs: and though it ſeems to our ſelves, that we perform it with much impurity and imperfection; yet our continued endeavours, enabled with Gods concurring grace, will ſpeedily raiſe us up to divine Vnion.

The ſixteenth Maxim.

That outward Obſervances are helps in the practice of this Exerciſe.

Read F. *Ciſnerius* ch. 68.

ALl externall practices, duties, and mortifications, as faſtings, diſciplines, retirements, vocal devotions, &c. muſt be directed to further

er our internal converſation with od, and to help us in the acquiſi-on of ſolid vertue and divine nion: for elſe they will but puff s up, and make us proud of no-hing; profiting little, with much abour.

Yet we muſt be wary of offend-ing againſt the leaſt ordinance of the Church, order of the Houſe, or diſpoſition of our Superiours; we muſt be conſcientious, careful, and punctual in each ceremony and conſtitution; omitting nothing up-on pretence that it is no great mat-ter, not commanded under ſin, or not much conducing to our ſpiritual advancement: For this is a token of an *ignorant, unfaithful, or indiſ-creet ſpirit.* Gods will, is as well in little as in great things; and who ſo is careleſs in ſmall matters, will ſoon fail in higher.

We muſt not offend againſt the leaſt ordinance, &c.

The

The seventeenth Maxim.

That Prayer for others is best practised by a general intention.

We must not lightly promise,

WE are not lightly to promise the performance of particular Prayers for others, either living or dead. This sort of charity, hinders, diverts, and dissipats our souls; breeding multiplicity, when as *one thing is only necessary*. We must therefore omit all such obligations, as may renew old affections; and labor to forget and forsake *all*, that we may more purely adhere to *one*, who is *our all in all*: wherefore let this generall, vertuall, and cordiall intention, suffice for all cases of this nature.

Nor oblige our selves to pray for others.

First, that we desire to be partakers of all prayers, sacrifices, and merits of the whole Church militant and triumphant, as far as God shall please and we need. *Next* that we intend to pray for all, (and especially for them who have desired it, or to whom we stand any way

way ingaged), as we do for our selves.

And this without any personall reflexion, is more profitable to our friends, and less prejudiciall to our selves: All which is to be understood, when no *peculiar promise*, occasion, or circumstance, induceth a speciall obligation and performance.

The eighteenth Maxim.

That all vertues are best practised by addicting our selves to Contemplation, or this internal Exercise of Recollection.

THe chief way to practise vertue, and prevent temptations, is not by a direct and formall reflexion upon them, which imprints images in the soul, and averts her from attending purely to God in her interiour: But by a vertuous and vigorous binding of her will to God: for being thus seriously and sweetly intent to him only, she can by a happy disdain forget and pass over, or

The practice of all vertues in contemplation.

or through all occurring difficulties; and ſo behave her ſelf orderly and diſcreetly, as to content both God and man.

Now that all vertues in particular are thus moſt excellently practiſed; it appears, firſt in *Faith*: Whereof we are taught to make a *lively Act* in the entrance to this exerciſe. And what way can this vertue be more heroically put in uſe, than to have our ſouls lifted above all ſenſible objects, all diſcourſe, all humane wiſdom?

Of Faith.

Hope is here practiſed: for we ly proſtrate at Gods feet as poor beggers, hoping to obtain his grace in order to the performance of his *Will*, and expecting all good from his meer mercy.

Hope.

Here alſo our *Love* is exerciſed: becauſe our *Will* covets nothing but to content our Creator, and reſts ſeparated from all that is not himſelf, for the *ſole love* of him.

Charity.

Here is the practice of perfect *Reſignation*: for we wiſh neither quiet nor diſquiet, glory nor infamy, pleaſure nor pain, but only the fulfilling

Reſignation.

fulfilling of Gods Will, and a desire to be left in what state he best likes.

Patience, must be here necessarily practised, in respect of the crosses and contradictions suggested by sensuality in this *afflicting exercise*. Patience, So called by *Thaulerus*.

All *sin* is here destroyed; For *that* is an aversion from our Creator, and a conversion to creatures: but *here* (by means of *perfect Faith*) we remain (as it were) agglutinated to God, and governed by his inward grace, which stills all outward motions, stifles all concupiscences, and makes us unknowing and forgetfull of our selves, and all things created. Destruction of sin.

As for *Mortification* it is here practised in a high degree: *For he that tasts the sweets of the Spirit, growes soon disgusted with all carnal delights*; here the *flesh* is totally supplanted, and the *senses* quieted; for the *eyes* see no outward object, the *ears* attend to no noyse, the *tongue* remains silent, the *understanding* contemns all curiosities, the *memory* Mortification. S. Greg. the great.

memory drawes a curtain over all images; the *will* is disingag'd from willing or nilling any thing; finally here is an entire destruction of all *sensuality*.

Obedience. *Obedience* is perfectly practised, because the wings of discourse are clip'd, and the *understanding* captivated by *Faith*.

Humility. *Humility* can no where more appear, than when a *soul* is so *annihilated*, as to trust neither little nor much to her-self. O Rich nothing! What spirituall mines, what Masses of treasures doth a soul find, that hath thus happily lost her self in her loving Lord?

Adoration and all acts of Religion. *Adoration*, *sacrifice*, *devotion*, and all acts of Religion, are here effectually practised; & in a word, if we will be perfect, (*sayes Thaulerus*), we must learn this abstraction, that is, this suspension of discourse, and silencing all the workings of *Fancie*, *understanding*, *memory*, *will*; leaving our souls to the absolute conduct of our Loving Lord, according to the doctrine here delivered; which

which is the short and secure way to make all our actions divine, and celestiall.

Some examples for the practice of this divine way of Prayer.

1. Receiving the *Blessed Sacrament*, I say to my heavenly guest; *My God, make me partaker of these sacred mysteries, that my soul may enjoy the effects for which they were by you instituted*: Then being secured by my act of *Faith*, that I have received his body, blood, soul, divinity, *&c.* I settle my self in this holy idlenesse and abstraction before described, and remain silent and recollected, *hearkning what my dear Lord will speak within me.* Examples. How to communicate.

2. So when I have taken some point of my Saviours *Passion* for the subject of my *prayer*, I say; *O my Lord, communicate to my soul what you endured in this mystery, to the end she may enjoy those effects, for which you suffer'd it, &c.* How to pray.

3. In like manner, when I goe to take my rest, I say; *Silence my soul!* How to take our rest.

soul! for our God is here present, with us, and within us: and in this verity, Recollecting my self in him, I rest all night in prayer (or at least my Lord allows it me as if I did), because my soul covets to continue in the same happy abstraction recollection, and annihilation, during the whole time of sleep.

And doe all things to God's glory. 1 Thessal. 5.17.

4. Thus a vertuous, *introverted, and recollected soul*, doing what lys in her to rest alwaies in her Centre (which is God,) may follow and fulfill the *Apostles* counsel, which is, *to pray continually*, and *doe all things*, (even her naturall and necessary actions, of eating, drinking, sleeping *&c.*) to *Gods glory*; and these pure desires and intentions, render them all meritorious.

Some further advices for the practice of this pure Prayer.

The first advice.

1. Before we thus *recollect* our selves in God, we may make what acts we please; but after wee are entred into it, we are to remain still, quiet, silent insensible, unmoveable as a stock to be fashioned, or a stone to be carved, according to

the

the heavenly workmans design: we must leave our selves entirely to be moved and managed, as best likes our great Master, who both knows what bee our necessities, and how, and when, to supply them.

2. We must take speciall notice, That as all *Arts* have their proper tearms; So this *sacred science of Mystical Divinity*, hath its peculiar phrases and expressions: Divine matters may not bee handled according to the manner and method of *School subtilties*; but are to be represented only with simplicity, piety, and a holy liberty of words, which Contemplatives make use of, without metaphysicall questions and arguments. The second advice.

When therefore we find in St. *Bonaventure*, *Eschius*, *Thaulerus*, *Rusbrochius*, *Blosius* and others, *That a soul divinely and intimately united to God, doth clearly see and experience what shee obscurely believed by faith*; we are not to infer, that shee therefore loseth her faith in this life; for this Mysticall experience takes not away our faith How to understand mysticall writers. Read *Cismerius* ch. 29.

faith, but fortifies, comforts, and clears it.

So when it is usually said by these spirituall writers, *That such a degree of Contemplation, of vertue, or of pure love, is the very top of perfection*; It is not meant, that a soul which is ascended thither can climb no higher in this her exile: for that highest degree of perfection hath a latitude of many degrees of grace; whereby a soul may still encrease in sanctity, and ascend each moment to a nearer vicinity with her Creator,

When likewise we meet with this doctrine, *A soul arrived at Union and Transformation, carries her self passively, she acts not but suffers, God doth all within her, &c.* We are to understand, that such a soul doth very little or nothing in comparison of what she did in her former discoursive exercises; because she here in this state, finds all done in an instant; and therefore leaves those painfull employments, to repose sweetly in a kind of holy idlenesse of Contemplation and

Union

Union with God; which pacifies all her senses, silences all discourses, and lulls all her powers asleep with his charming love and ravishing presence: All which notwithstanding, she remains still here actually loving and looking on her Lord, and consequently is not totally idle, but is in cooperation with his grace.

In this sense, St. *Denys* said; *The Soul of Blessed* Hierotheus *was heightned to such a Union with God, that it sufferd more than it acted*, because in this *passive contemplation*, the soul follows not her accustomed operations: as wee see our *Understanding* works not so much, when it receives its aliment from a higher knowledge, as when it gets it by constrained and laborious discourse; nor our *Will* in like sort, which commonly follows the motives proposed by the Understanding, to which it is united. S. *Denys*. Ch. 7. *de div. nom.*

3. That which is most important in this exercise of Recollection, is the practice of *Faith, Hope and Charity*: For by the Act of *Faith*, The 3. advice, of the practice of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Faith, all our knowledge is annihilated; by the act of *Hope*, all our worth is evacuated, in denying our own forces and relying meerly on Gods assistance; by the act of *Charity*, all our wills and affections (which are not God, in God, for God,) are abandoned: So that by these three Acts the whole man is drowned, suppressed, stifled; and consequently our enemy the *Devil* finds nothing at all to lay hold on, nor any way open for his entrance into our annihilated hearts; but is constrained to return alwaies foiled and ashamed of his ineffectuall efforts.

The fourth advice. For Beginners.

4. *Beginners* in this exercise, must vigorously apply themselves unto it for some time, till use and experience fashion them into a habit of *recollection*; they must therefore in the first place, carefully cleanse their *interiour* from all objects whatsoever. and then lock up themselves with God in this inward retreat: for as in vain wee shut our dores and windows, if the thief bee already hid in our house;

house; so the closing of our senses from *exteriour objects*, furthers little or nothing, if in our *interiour* there lurks any thing which is not God.

5. In all our vocall and mentall devotions, our chief aym must be *Attention to God*: There are three sorts of attentions. 1. To the words, which is good. 2. To the sense, which is better. 3. To God, (who is the only end of all our prayer), *which is best of all*. Let our thoughts therefore abstract from all created objects though never so good, and fix stedfastly upon the increated and essentiall goodness. This is the main thing wee must aspire to, during the whole course of our life, not only in our prayers, but in all our practices, *To bee more attentive to our Lord and love, than to the action we have in hand*: This is the Philosophy of perfect lovers, to live more truly where they love, than where they breath. The fifth advice, of our attention to God. S. *Tho.* 2. 2. *q.* 83. *a.* 13.

6. It is not here intended (by the precedent doctrine), that a soul The sixt advice.

That from Meditation we must rise to Contemplation.

should not at all meditate upon the subject or theame of her prayer, nor chew it first by attentively considering it: No, this is not dissuaded but counselled: Only we add, that assoon as affections are sufficiently kindled, and that *our elevated soul* can procure to put themselves upon the aforesaid abstraction, recollection, and contemplation, they presently embrace it, and leave off all discourses which are proper for Schools & Sermons, not for Prayer and Contemplation: It sufficeth us therefore to *remember* the mystery, *apprehend* it throughly, *imprint* it deeply in our hearts, and then to observe the prescribed order: For when one hath sufficiently heard and understood what can be said for his good, he needs neither hear nor speak more of it, but presently fall to practise: In this case to hearken after new things, seems more tending to satisfy curiosity, than to the increase of inward vertue as he that eats before he hath digested his former meals, nourisheth bad humours, but nothing betters his

own

own bodily strength.

7. When therefore any distinct notions, forms, or images, intrude themselves into our memories; let us not stay in them, but return amorously to our Lord present within us, think no more of all those varieties, than is absolutely necessary for the knowledge and performance of our duties. The best way therefore to increase our inward strength of spirit, is to work courragiously and suffer patiently in silence and solitude, forgetting all creatures, unkowing all objects, transcending all humane events and accidents. What though the whole world perished? though the frame of heaven and earth were dissolved? *What is that to thee? follow thou thy Lord and love.* For indeed he that hath his mind diverted and distracted with such fancies in prayer, is little attentive to Gods presence.

The 7. advice. That we must stay upon no objects or images.

The 8. advice. How God is to be proposed to our understanding, in an eminent and Negative way.

8. As concerning our *Understanding and Will*: We are to take notice, that when the *Understanding* proposeth God to the Will, as just,

juſt, wiſe, powerfull, or under any particular attribute; the *Will* is elevated by that ſight alone; and ſo that act of love is limited, lock'd up, and leſs perfect, than if God were propoſed under a moſt eminent way. and as the ſupream being, ſurpaſſing infinitly all that can fall within the verge of humane conceptions in this life. Though therefore the *Underſtanding* may and can propoſe ſome *poſitive* and particular conception of God to the *Will*; yet it is far better, and of higher perfection, to do it in common, confuſedly and *negatively: for our trueſt knowledge of God, is to know that we can fully know nothing of him.* This is to know by *ignorance*; and it is ſignified by *Elias*, *covering his eyes with his cloak when God paſſed before him*; becauſe all our knowledge is diſproportionate to God, and therefore we muſt ſhut our eyes, totally, if we will contemplate him perfectly.

1 S. Greg. the great. l. 5. moral. c. 26.

Read Ciſnerius. c. 28

O holy ignorance! What Peſant is ſo ſimple, what Soul, (indued with

with ordinary capacity) is so senslesse, as not to conceive, and comprehend the easie art of this excellent manner of *Prayer*: for having been admitted to *Faith*, and adorned with the gifts of the *holy Ghost*, *in baptisme*, she hath all that is required to make her capable of *this Contemplation*. We deny not, but that she stands in need of Gods special assistance to elevate her to this height; for this *Maxim* is always presuppoled; *That God concurs to humane acts, as the first cause, and to supernaturall acts, as the authour of grace.* As for *passive or infus'd Contemplation* as it is altogether *supernaturall*, so it is totally *Gods work*: and this we possess when we cannot at all meditate, and yet persever in this holy amorous, and *negotiative* idleness. See S. *Aug. l.* 19. *c.* 2. *de civit. Dei.*

9. If what is here set down for the practice of this *Prayer*, seemes intricate or tedious to any one; let such a soul make choice of that she conceives expedient for her comfort, and leave the rest: for it is not intended that she should be tied to this The 9. advice. To take and make use of what is most to our spirituall purpose.

this or that way but only that she should be convinc'd and confirm'd in *this truth*; That *to behold God with a simple understanding* (which is the same thing with active Contemplation) *is more pleasing to him, and profitable to her self, than to seek after him by the sublimest discourses.*

An exhortation to Contemplation.

Retire therefore (*ô contemplative souls!*) from all sensible and intelligible objects; and recollect, abstract, annihilate, and lose your selves in God: for *there* (even in the most refined conceptions), your enemy may find ground to pitch his nets: but *here* you are in *sanctuary and safety* where he can never reach or touch you: Here, and here only in this *silence* from all discourses; in this *solitude* from all creatures; in this *idleness* from all action; in this *retrait* into the Divine Bosom; in this *resignation* and conformity to Gods will; you may taste his sweetness in it's proper source: here and here only are full and overflowing measures of delight. Created pleasures scarcely reach the soul before

before they are consumed in the senses; and therefore can never quench our inward thirst after God: 'Tis he alone is capable to content and quiet us, who is our *first beginning*, and our *final end*: And who so *dives* into this *truth*, will make higher account of one *crum* of this *contemplation*, than of all earthly *crowns* and *kingdoms*.

The nineteenth Maxim.

That corporal austerities, must be always subject to obedience.

AUsterities, are sometimes *necessary*, sometimes *obligatory*, and sometimes *dangerous*.

1. By *necessary* austerities, are meant the restraint of our senses, tongues, conversation, self-will: and in this sort of mortification, there is no danger of excess. Austerities are either 1. Necessary,

2. Those austerities which are *commanded*, must be preferred before them which are voluntary. 2. Obligatory,

3. Corporal austerities are most *dangerous* & least profitable, when performed 3. or dangerous.

formed by order of our own Will, without entire ſubmiſſion to Superiours direction, for theſe are more worthy of reprehenſion, than praiſe.

But the chief *auſterity of life*, conſiſts in the continuall application of our ſelves to *interiour recollection*, *introverſion*, and *contemplation*: For here we perpetually chain up our thoughts, yoke all our ſenſes, reform our appetites, correct the diſorders of our paſſions, regulate our actions, ſhackle our Wills, and admit nothing into our ſouls, which may retard or trouble their totall tendance to their Lord and lover: So that in the opinion of all ſpirituall men, this is the *moſt rigorous mortification*, and moſt meritorious way of doing penance. For what is this *continual prayer*, but an *abſolute bondage* of the *whole inward and outward man*? ſince we may not taſt, touch, will, do, any thing we have a mind too. And though this bleſſed ſlavery may bring us in time to a heavenly tranquillity of life; yet the due and dayly practice of this *denial and death*

The chief auſterity is continual Recollection.

of

of the Will, doth so extenuate our truly mortified *bodies*, that *they* rather need sometimes to be cherished, than to be any further punished.

The twentieth Maxim.

That Contemplatives must alwayes have the seven verities, (which concern the divine nature, whereupon all Contemplation is grounded), either habitually, or formally in their memories.

1. That *God is an eternal being*: he hath ever been, and ever will be, and 'tis impossible for him to be otherwise. 1 God is an Eternal,

2. That God is an *interminable being*: he so fills and penetrates all things, and all places, that his being borns them, and not they him, who is an infinite fullness. 2. Interminable,

3. That God is *a simple being*: he is all in all creatures, all without them, and all in each part of them; because having in himself no parts by reason of his infinit simplicity, he must necessarily be with all his 3. Simple,

per-

perfection, whereſoever he is.

4. Vnchangeable,

4. That God is *an unchangeable being*: he can neither change in reſpect of *place*, becauſe he is every where; nor in reſpect of *time*, for he is eternal; nor in what concerns *himſelf*, by reaſon he is an infinite perfection; and therefore there is in him nothing ſuperfluous to reject, nor defective to repair.

5. Independent,

5. That God is an *independent being*: All things depend on him, live in him, are conſerved by him; and all being is ordained to the glory of his bounty, whence they had their beginning.

6. Al-ſufficient,

6. That God is an *all-ſufficient being*: he remedies all that is amiſs, ſupplies all that is wanting, communicates all that is good, ſatisfies all deſires, without the leaſt diminution of his own infinite perfections.

7. Incomprehenſible being.

7. That God is an *incomprehenſible being*: no created underſtanding can comprehend what God is; All our knowledge is too ſilly and ſhort to reach his heights; yet our ſpirits are dilated by the

light

light of Faith; and though our Creator may not be comprehended by the creature, yet he may be known by whom he pleaseth, when he pleaseth, and as much as he pleaseth.

These verities, and other infinite perfections of God, give light to our dark and weak understandings, in order to the knowledge of his Sovereign Essence.

The 21. Maxim.

That Jaculatory Prayers, are the neareſt diſpoſitions to Contemplation.

IF a soul finds great difficulty to unwind her self from worldly imaginations, and to apply her self to God by recollection; let her content her-self in breathing forth heartily these or the like short words: [*O my Lord, when shall I love you? When shall I embrace you?*] Let her repeat them affectionatly and perseverantly, and she shall sooner be inflamed with divine love, than

This is the doctrine of S. *Bonaven. circa finem myst. Theol.*

than by the ſubtle conſideration of the greateſt ſecrets of heaven: for 'tis the *Will* which unites us to God, not the *Vnderſtanding*.

Theſe acts of the *Will*, are the *ſpiritual wings of the ſoul*, to lift her up & unite her to her *beloved obiect*, they are ſhort, ſharp, and ſwift darts and deſires, ſhot by our burning hearts, and reaching heaven in an inſtant. Our forefathers *the Saints* frequently uſed them, and moſt highly priſed them: for being ſhort, they trouble not the memory; being fervent, they rowſe our dulneſs and dryneſs to affection and devotion; being frequent, they ſtill renew our attendance to Gods preſence, and put us perpetually in mind of our duties.

Read the 10. collation of *John Caſſian.* c 10.

Read the Spiritual Conſl. ch. 13. n. 12.

The practice of this exerciſe, is to take occaſion from all objects, actions, and accidents, to pray, and praiſe God. Do we eat? let us give God thanks. Do we walk abroad? Let us praiſe him who produced all things which we behold, from the abyſs of nothing. Do we look up to heavens beauty? Let us admire

admire the Creator in his creatures? &c. Have we sinned, or are we tempted? Let us lift up our hearts to God, and say, *O Lord, permit me not to fall and offend thee. To do? alas, I am content when thou dispossest: but to sin? O preserve me from this disaster!* Other times let us burst forth into aspirations of love; as *My beloved for me, and I for him.* Of Resignation; as, *Not my will, ô Lord, but thine be done. What do I desire in heaven or earth, but thee, ô my God.* Of pure intention; as, *'Tis for you, ô my God, that I fast; 'tis for your sake that I obey my Superiour; 'tis to please you that I study, work, pray, &c. Your will, ô Lord, is mine; your content is mine: I have no other I or No, but as you will or will not; all my pleasure is only to please you, &c.*

This rule is to be observed, that though all jaculatory prayers are good, yet those are best, most profitable and powerfull, which our hearts, (moved by God), conceive of themselves; though they be expressed in words never so plain and simple. An observation.

No

Nor is there any need of much variety of aſpirations; for one only word, being often and amorouſly repeated, may ſerve for many days, when our ſouls find therein gust and profit, and ſpeak unto him whom they look upon as preſent with their eys of Faith.

This exerciſe is moſt eaſy, and moſt efficacious: and they who ſhall piouſly perſever in it, ſhall ſoon find their hearts inflamed with God's love, and changed from all worldly affections.

The 22. Maxim.

That the Preſence of God, is the great exerciſe of Contemplatives, and the ſhorteſt way to divine Vnion.

Why call'd the great exerciſe,

THis exerciſe is called *great*, becauſe God himſelf taught it in the worlds infancy to his faithfull ſervant *Abraham*: I am thy God, (ſaith hee), and thy protectour, *walk in my preſence, and thou ſhalt be perfect.*

It

It is called *the shortest way to divine Union*; becaus it is a summary of all the exercises of prayer, and which alone will conduct our souls to the hidden treasure of perction, and repleniſh them with thoſe celeſtiall riches, which our loving Lord is wont to communicate to his deareſt friends in this life.

And shortest way to union.

God is preſent in ſeverall manners according to our underſtanding:

How God is present in divers manners.

1. He is every where *preſent by his eſſence*; which being infinit, cannot bee contained within the limits of any place.

2. He is every where *preſent by his power*: He moves the heavenly orbs, fixes the earth, governs all his creatures, *&c.*

3. He is particularly preſent *in heaven*, by the demonſtrations of his glory.

4. He is ſpecially *preſent in holy places*, by grace, benediction, and readineſs to hear their Petitions, bleſs their perſons, and accept their ſacrifices of praiſe, who ſhall there:

there unanimouſly meet to preſent them.

5. He is eſpecially *preſent in the hearts of his holy people*, by the inhabitation of his holy Spirit.

6. He is eſpecially *preſent in the conſciences of all men*, where he ſits as witneſſe, and judge of all their actions, good and bad.

Seven ſimilitudes for the practice of Gods preſence.

For the practice of this exerciſe of Gods preſence, we may help our thoughts with theſe ſeven ſimilitudes, ſtirring up in our ſouls an ardent deſire to feel the like effects of his Al-preſent Majeſty.

1. How the *ſoul is in the body*; all in the whole, and all in every part of it, moving, animating, informing all; giving it life, beauty, *&c.*

2. How the *meat* we eat is diſgeſted and changed into our ſubſtance, *&c.*

3. How a *little worm* lying in the warm Sun-ſhine is environed about with the beams, made bright, hot and as it were, burned and inflamed *&c.*

4. How a *black coale* amidſt a great

great fire, is ignified, all on fire, and well nigh all fire.

5. How a little *piece of paper*, is pearced through with oyl falling on it; which by degrees dilates it self all over, that the whole seems rather oyl than paper.

6. How a small *quantity of water* in a vessell of wine, is swallowed up, lost, changed, annihilated, and turned into wine.

7. How *a sponge in the midst of the Ocean*, is all compassed within and without, absorpt, imbued, possessed, and as it were, inebriated with water, *&c.*

O that we could alwaies have this actuall faith and thought, that God stands a present witnesse and judge of all our doings; that if we goe forth he spies us; if we goe in he sees us; if we light the candle he observes us; when wee put it out, he also marks us; should wee not behave our selves as becoms so holy a presence? should we not be very impious and impudent to give up the reigns to sin, and sensuality? S. *Augustin. de verbis Domini* c. 3.

O that wee would alwaits ruminate

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minate and remember this reall *verity*, That God is the *great eye* of the world, watching over our actions; an *ever-open ear*, to hear all our words; and an *unwearied arm* to crush sinners into ruin how speedily would sin cease amongst us? how soon should we obtain an habituall fear and reverence of God? What greater ingagement can wee have to walk unblameably, than to consider wee act before *that judge*, who is infallible in his sentence, *all-knowing* in his information; *severe* in his wrath, and *powerfull* to inflict punishment?

Boetius l. 5. de consola.

This perpetuall *eying of God* is properly a building to him a Chappell in our hearts, into which we may securely and sweetly retire in the midst of all worldly varieties. This is to walk with God, (as *Enoch* did;) and to be in continuall conversation with the Divinity.

A more sublime way to practise Gods presence: is

To look alwaies upon him without any discourse, by a *simple act* of *lively*

lively Faith: not to question how, or in what manner he is present; nor to fix our eys upon his inaccessible splendours; because it is yet *night* for us, we are but *travellers*, and we must expect untill the *bright day* of eternity shine upon us and shew him unto us *as he is* in himself; we must not think here to behold him, but be content to beleeve him present with us and within us, and that we live, move, and have our being in, and by him.

A higher way to practise Gods presence.

In this manner of practising God's presence, it is not needfull to form any conception, or representation of God; as that he is here by us, or in any designed place, or in such a form or figure: for wee speak here of the presence of God *as he is God*, which excludes all these imaginations: And therefore it sufficeth to behold him only *by Faith*, simply beleeving that he is here and in all places, that he fils the whole universe, and each corner and creature therein contained, and *that he is more inward to us than we are to our selves.* S. *Augus.*

The

The 23. Maxim.

That Humiliation is a reliqu of Gods love.

WHen any occaſion is offered us, of humiliation, abjection, or mortification, let us not examine, how, whence, or from whom it comes: but joyfully accept it, embrace it, and kiſs it, as a rich relique, and royall token of God's great love and favour towards us: Let us force our ſenſuality to ſwallow it down and diſgeſt it; for though it be bitter, it will purge and perfect our ſpirits.

The 24. Maxim.

That Humility is the ſolid groundwork of all Spirituality.

WE are to grave this neceſſary leſſon, not only upon our Oratory, and in all our books, but upon the very dores of our hearts, and in the depth of our ſouls: *Learn*

of

of me, who am meek and humble-hearted, and you shall find rest for your souls. O sweet Saviour! O meek and mercifull lamb of God! teach me this lesson, which I stand in such need of. Oh, that I could perfectly practise it? How purely and peaceably should I both live and dye? Meek and humble spirits converse together like mourning turtles, like innocent lambs, and like corporall Angels, turning the blessed family where they live, into an earthly Paradise, *&c.* Christ's lesson, is humility. Mat. 11. 29.

In the externall practice of this vertue, wee are to observe chiefly these three degrees.

First, to forbear, forgoe, deny, and submit our own judgements, heartily, humbly, and really, not only to our Superiours, but also to all others, casting our selves at their feet, yea and under their feet to be troden on as dust and dirt: And this, as near as may bee, for Gods sake. Three points for the externall practise of humility.

Secondly, not to care what others say or think of us; which point, with that other, Of not medling

medling with what concerns us not, will soon bring us unspeakable peace and purity; thinking alwaies with our selves; *What is that to thee? follow thou thy Saviour.*

Thirdly, to get a habit of patience, condescendence, yielding and being silent, in all occurrences and contradictions.

In the internall practice of humility, we are also to observe these three degrees.

Three points for the internall practice.

First, to confess and acknowledge our selves more wretched and wicked, impure and imperfect ungratefull and unworthy of all grace and favour, than any soul created.

Secondly, to be glad that others treat us for such, as we really take our selves to be; and repute us forlorn and forsaken creatures, unworthy of all company and comfort.

Thirdly, to dye utterly to our selves, and be totally mortified in our appetites and desires renouncing absolutely all propriety, and self-seeking: These short words, contain

contain infinit perfection.

And to move us powerfully to the prosecution of this vertue, we may thus question our selves:

1. Doe not all things humble themselves to serve me, both in heaven and earth? The Saints to pity me, the Angels to protect me, *the Mother of God to remember me*, the Son of God to redeem me, and God himself to remain with me, reign within me, comfort me in my prayers, feed me in Communion, releeve me in tribulation? Motives to humility.

2. O strange Humility of my Saviour! Not only to descend unto, but into a wicked worm; not only to eat with a sinner, but to be eaten by a sinner! O strange pride in me, to see the Lord of heaven and earth, so humbled in his Incarnation, Passion, Communion, and yet to see a begger so proud, a sinner so lofty minded, and dust and ashes have such difficulty to stoop!

3. Upon earth: Doe not all things serve me for body or soul? some to nourish me, some to cloath

me, others to cure me, others to correct me, others to comfort and inſtruct me? Even my betters, ſuperiors, and confeſſors, muſt humble themſelves to me, becauſe my pride will not bend to them. All creatures muſt be ſubject to me, and I will not be ſubject to my Creator? Alas! what mean I? when ſhall I begin? O ſecure and ſweet Humility, when ſhall I practice thee?

4. Doth not all the world, all that I am and have; my body, my ſoul, my actions, my ſufferings, my ſins, furniſh me with ſufficient arguments of Humility! What was I from eternity? What am I? what ſhall I be? What have I that I have not received? what have I received that I have not abuſed? *&c.*

Eſay 66. 2. 5. Upon whom doth the *Holy Ghoſt promiſe to reſt, but on humble and quiet ſouls*? Stoop O duſt and aſhes! O amiable Humility how neceſſary art thou for me? how pleaſing to God and men? With what comfort and quiet doſt thou

thou enrich thy possessour? O heaven upon earth! What doe I not get by Humility? what doe I lose by Pride and presumption? *&c.*

The 25. Maxim.

That Silence and Solitude, are our heaven upon earth.

THese are *the proper instruments of Contemplation*; where our souls sit *silently and solitarily lifted up above themselves*; by transcending all things created, and uniting themselves to their Creatour. S. Tho. 2. 2. q. 188. a. 8. Lam. 3. 28

Wee must observe them diligently, discreetly, and devoutly; not out of a sullen or melancholy humour, or in a disdainfull and disgustfull manner, or out of pride and singularity, or to wave matter of mortification, or to avoid the company of such as we brook not and have aversion from: but with an internall cheerfulness, to converse with God in spirituall joy and fervour. And the ordinary Read *Cisnerius.* ch. 39.

practice of them may be reduced to these four points.

4. Points for practice.

First, To retire our selves, and keep exactly some certain times of silence every day, which (our calling considered), we have enjoyned our selves unto.

Secondly, to decline imperceptibly divers unnecessary and impertinent occasions, extroversions, affairs, companies, curiosities, *&c.*

Thirdly, to speak modestly and moderately in time of speaking.

Fourthly, to yield easily to others, and not contest in words: For all consists in denying and humbling our selves.

Now *in Contemplation*, there are three sorts of Silence.

In Contemplation there is a three-fold Silence.

1. When all fancies, imaginations, and species cease in the soul; So that she is silent as to any created object; desiring no worldly thing, but driving from her all that is not directly God, to whom only she is silently, joyfully, and quietly attentive.

2. When in this great calm, she sits with *Mary* at her Lord's feet,

in

in a certain ſpirituall idleneſs; as it were ſaying; *I will hear what my Lord ſpeaks within me*: to whom he anſwers; *Hearken my daughter, and behold, and forget thy people and thy fathers houſe.*

3. When ſhe transforms her ſelf all into God, her Will taſting his ſweetneſſe, and ſhe ſlumbring in his boſome, in abſolute ſilence, deſiring nothing more, becauſe fully ſatisfied.

So that here is a threefold ſilence. 1. *When no creature talks to us*; as having no objects of them in our Underſtandings and Memories. 2. *When we talk not to our ſelves*; as, totally forgetting our ſelves, and converting our inward man to God alone, with a receptive ſubjection; climbing above our ſelves *by the act of Faith*, whereby *our Underſtanding* is united immediately to God. 3. *When God talks not to us*, but leaves us in the enjoyment of this divine ſweetneſs, and elevation of our ſelves above our ſelves. O heavenly ſilence! This hath been by ſome *experienced*,

but can be by none *sufficiently explicated.*

The 26. Maxim.

That the perfect love of God, and hatred of our selves, must be our constant and continuall employment.

How to know whether we love God, and hate our selves.

WE cannot love God, except we hate our selves; and if we would truly know how far we are advanced in this love and hatred: First, wee must weigh, how willingly we can, and doe submit our judgement, in things contrary to our naturall inclination; Secondly, how quietly we can, and doe suffer such things as are opposite to our sensuality, as hard usage, pains, confusions, *&c.*

We must not conceive we have any degree of pure and perfect love, untill our affections are so totally transformed into God, that he freely and fully possesses our spirit, guides it, enlightens it, inflames it, elevates it, how and when he pleaseth; His love being our only light and

and life, and we desiring only two things in the world: First, to love, see, taste and enjoy God only; Secondly, to be humbled, despised, reviled, rejected, reputed reprobates for his love. O sweet life! O loving Lord Jesu! What heaven? what happiness is this?

We may stir up our souls to an ardent love of God, by these and the like motives.

Motives to love God.

First; What is the object of our love, and who is the authour of all our good? Is it not God only? What have we, (nay what hath he), that he hath not given us, meerly of love and for love? thereby to woo, to win, to wed our loves, our souls, our spirits to himself? 1.

2. Who created, redeemed, converted, called, and conserveth us untill this present? What hath he not done and endured to purchase our love? 2.

3. What is the greatest love in the world of mother, wife, friend, life, soul? &c. Is not God more than all this to us, yea all in all? What did we ever best love? Did 3.

we love God as much? O let us bluſh, ſigh, and be aſhamed at our groſs ingratitude. Live henceforth *O Jeſu*, my only Lord and love.

4. 4. Whoſe image doe we bear? whoſe bitter death was our ranſome? whoſe body and blood is our daily bread and drink? who ſuffred ſo much for us and from us, expected us ſo patiently, invited us ſo ſweetly, received us ſo mercifully? O Lord what ſhall we doe or ſay? We are bound in thy chains of charity. We love thee; We are all thine, *&c.*

5. 5. Upon whom doe wee depend each moment for our whole being both of nature and grace? Our bodies depend not ſo much on our ſouls, nor our life on air, as all things, body, life, ſoul, depend upon thee, *O powerfull Lord God!* O that I had whole worlds to offer thee, infinit bodies to ſuffer for thee, and innumerable ſouls to love thee!

6. 6. Have we not an inclination to love? For what were we created? Can we better employ our love

love than upon God? Doth any Creature better deserve it, or more desire it, than our amiable Creator!

7. Can any thing else fully quiet us in this life, or totally content us in the next? O no: *Sweet Saviour*, thou art my only safety, security, sanctity. Oh what did I ever love in the world, wch did not in the end bring me remorse and repentance? Is not all mix'd with many occasions of sin and misery; all vain, inconstant, fading, foolish, deceitfull? Our souls, *ô Lord*, are created to and for thee, and untill they turn and return unto thee, they will never find perfect peace, quiet, nor content. What quiet had the Prodigal child, till he return'd to his loving Father? *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to thy Lord God*; Why wilt thou seek after puddle water, when as thou mai'st freely quench thy thirst at the fountain head? *I thirst, ô my Lord, give me this water.* 7. S. *Augustin*

8. To whom must we have recourse, amidst all the distresses of this miserable life? Who will or 8.

can comfort us in the pains and pangs of death? Who must be our Judge after death? Who must be our eternall bliss and beatitude? Thou only, *O our Lord and love*, art only all this and all things else to our souls. And shall we please a creature to displease thee our Creator? *No Lord*, we will dy to all creatures, that we may live to thee eternally.

9. 9. *O my soul!* Upon what canst thou employ thy whole stock of love more reasonably, than upon him, who for thy love freely forfeited his own life?

10. 10. To whom canst thou give up thy self more profitably, than to him who promiseth eternal life for thy love; and that he will be all thine, if thou wilt be all his?

11. 11. To whom canst thou convert thy heart & wed thy affections more necessarily; than to him, who threatens eternal death, if thou love him not? *O King of glory*, why menacest thou us with hell, if we love not? Can there be a heaven without thy love, or a hell with it?

Or

Or is there any heavier hell or death than not to love thee? Had we not better cease to live, than leave to love? Oh! what shall I answer, if I love not?

12. What can make a soul more truly honourable and happy, than to love God as he commandeth? What privilege, to be admitted into privacy with God, to enjoy his company and conversation, enter into his secret cabinet? eat at his table, repose on his breast, be his minion, become all one with him? O honour most admirable! O holyness most amiable! O happiness most Angelical! O life! O love! 12.

The 27. Maxim.

That Confidence in Gods goodness is the main support of our Spiritual Edifice.

WE must be confident that our Loving Lord, will, First, pardon our sins; Secondly, strengthen us in all necessities; Thirdly, bring us finally to eternall happiness. And

to

to ſtrengthen this Confidence, we
2. Maxims must deeply ingrave theſe two Maxims in our ſouls, and then we ſhall eaſily be content to leave our ſelves in the arms of his paternall providence, and loſe our ſelves in the abyſs of his piety: Firſt, *That what ever befalls us, comes immediately either from his will, or his permiſſion*; Secondly, *That he will turn all*, (even our frailties and failings) *to our ſpirituall good*. We may further weigh, what wonderfull cauſe of confidence and comfort we have;

Rusbrochius. Read the Conflict. c. 10. n. 3. 4

Motives to put our Confidence in God. First, in heaven we have, 1. *Viſcera miſericordiæ.* 2. *Vulnera miſericordiæ.*

First, In heaven; where we have 1. *Bowels of mercy*, in God the Father: we cry dayly to him as his Son taught us; *Our Father which art in heaven*, Will not a good father forgive the fault, and forget the folly of his returning and repenting childe? 2. *Wounds of mercy*, in God the Son, the leaſt of which was ſufficient to redeem a thouſand worlds: *whereby we being reconcil'd and made his friends*, will he deny us any thing that is neceſſary? Is not each drop of his dear blood a motive of loving confidence, and able to melt us into a

filiall

filiall dependency on him? 3. *Promises of mercy*, in God the Holy Ghost, who hath assured us of his continued comforts till the worlds consummation. 4. *Words of mercy*, when he said; *O why will you perish, you of the house of Israel? As I live I desire not the death of a sinner, but that he turn to me and live.* What hard heart would not be touch'd with tenderness, and say reciprocally; As I live, *ô my Lord God*, I detest all sin, and convert my self totally to thee, that I may live with thee, and love thee eternally. O holy Conversion! O happy contract! 5. *Brests of mercy*, in the Mother of Jesus: O Jesu, be to us a Jesus! *O Mother of Jesus, be to us a Mother of mercies*, Let the care of thy honour be ever in our hearts, and the care of our welfare always in thine. 6. *Castles of mercy*, in the Angels, who are before and behind us, to watch over and protect us. 7. *Oracles of mercy*; the prayers and suffrages of all the Saints pitying our misery, and purchasing pardon for us. If we put all this together

3. *Promissa misericordiæ.*

4. *Verba misericordiæ.*

5. *Vbera misericordiæ.*

6. *Castra misericordiæ.*

7. *Oracula misericordiæ.*

gether, we ſhall find all heaven for us. What matter then if hell be againſt us? *O thou of little faith, whereof canſt thou be doubtfull or fearfull, &c.*

Secondly, On Earth. Secondly, *On Earth* in the Church militant, what is not for us? Sacraments, Scriptures, Examples, Prayers. If we go not to heaven where is the fault? What could God do that he hath not done? and what could we have more than we have, for our conſolation and ſalvation? Who can chooſe but take courage, comfort, and confidence?

Thirdly, In Chriſt. Thirdly, Look upon *Chriſt Jeſus.* 1. Why came he into this world? 2. How did he carry himſelf in it towards ſinners, both in his life and death? 3. Why was he *called Jeſus*, and tearmed a *friend of Publicans and ſinners*? 4. Why did he ſay, *That he came to call ſinners, and not the Juſt, and to do mercy and not juſtice*? 5. What acceſs and comfort gave he to all ſinners? 6. What was his laſt will and teſtament, &c? 7. What his laſt words? *Father, forgive*, &c.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Ponder *Gods Perfe-ctions.* 1. *He is our maker, we the work of his hands:* Doth not each Artist love his own handy-work? Hath not every one a naturall proneneſs, to protect, improve, profit, and perfect his own? Even ſo our loving Lord takes care of us; he hides and harbors us, *as the Hen her Chickens under her wings*; he defends us *as the apple of his eye: If a mother can forget the fruit of her womb, yet will I never forget you* (ſay's our Lord), becauſe I have *graven you in my hands and heart.* 2. He is All-mighty, All-wiſdom, All-goodneſs: Put theſe together; I have a Father and Maker, that *loves* me exceedingly; he *knows* my neceſſities, and what is beſt for me; he is *rich* enough to provide for me: Will he let me periſh? will he reject me? Then reaſon thus further with your-ſelf; In whom ſhall I confide if not in God? In my ſelf or others? We are all inconſtant; all ignorant of what is beſt; all impotent, and want means to help: *O how much better is it, to truſt in God than men?* Fiftly,

Fourthly, Look on Gods perfections.

Fiftly our own experience.

Fiftly, Reflect upon your own Experience. 1. Whom did God ever deceive in his promiſes? 2. Who ever called heartily on him and was refuſed? 3. Hath he not hitherto merveilouſly protected and preſerved you, and diſpoſed all for your good? Why then ſhould you doubt or diſtruſt his providence for the time to come? No Lord, *Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in thee: Heaven and earth may periſh; but no tittle of my hope in thee, my Dear and only Saviour.* This ſhall be my Anchor and ſtay: *If he kill me, I will truſt in him.* I will reſt Secure in his Divine providence, and endeavour to get an habituall and ſtable truſt in his paternall protection, (without any care or fear), as doth a child in his fathers boſom: This is the ready way to become unmoveable and immutable, quiet and content.

Is he God? Is he good? Is he my God? my Father? my Jeſus? Jeſus crucified? Is his goodneſs infinit? Doth he want power, wiſdom or Will, to pardon, protect, and perfect me?

I must surely have little faith, less hope, and no love: If I will not take thy words, (O Lord) thy works, thy wounds, thy life and thy love for secure pledges of thy care towards me, and sufficient motives to place my whole confidence in thee.

The 28. *Maxim.*

That the measure of our progress in Perfection, is the Conformity of our Will with the divine will.

1. FOr our perfection consists in love: and the greatest signe of love, is to have one and the same Will with the beloved. So that look how much we have of our own Will, so much less have we of Gods will and love, and consequently are so much the further from the Union of our spirit with him.

O what holiness and happiness, what privilege and prerogative is it, to have one Will and spirit with God

1. In this exercise of conformity, consists all perfection.

God? Is not this to be a Saint, an Angel, a little Christ or a little God? Did not Christ say; *Those that do the will of my Father, are my Brethren, sisters, mother, and kindred?* Oh who would not change Wills with God?

2. All things come from God, and for our good.

2. What can befall me, (sin only excepted, wch is from my will) *but from thee my most sweet Lord, & loving Father?* *Good and bad, comfort & confusion, life and death are from thee*; And what can happen to me from thee, but for my good? If my Father be my Physician, shall I not drink the chalice he tempers for me? What better sacrifice can I offer up to thee than my will? In all other oblations, I give but a part of my self, or somthing belonging to my self: But in this I give the principall, leaving no right to my self; nay I am no more my self, but thy servant and slave.

3. This is the end of our life, and being.

3. Why were we placed in this world (*ô my soul*) but to perform the will of God? Why entred we into the school of perfection, but to learn to practise it purely and perfectly? To what end are all our prayers, communions, exer-

exercises, &c. but to know Gods holy will, and to follow it? What profit have we reaped by following hitherto our own will? What will become of us, if we continue in it? What means is there to amend it for the future, but humble obedience, and absolute submission of our will in all, and to all, leaving all to God, doing all for God, and receiving all from God, that he only may be all in all? What can endamage me but my will? what will? past, present, or to come. The past I detest; my present is, that Gods will be done; for time to come, I desire this my will may stand irrevocable for ever. How often have I done the will of others for my own ends, to please them or pleasure my self? and shall I not do now as much, to please my Lord God? Yes, *Lord*, I will what thou wilt, neither more nor less, without exception, without reservation, without delay.

4. What fruits shall I reap by this *Conformity of my Will*? 1 Having no will, I can neither sin, erre, nor be deluded. 2. There is neither judge- 4. The profits of this exercise.

judgement nor hell for me. 3. I ſhall find peace and reſt, and remain conſtant and content amidſt all chances and changes; and ſo begin my Paradiſe of delights, in this *vale of tears*. 4. I ſhall be freed from all troubleſome fears, ſcruples, diſquiets, indiſcretions, and illuſions, both in prayer, and in the practice of vertue: All which are deriv'd from the diſorder of my Will, and for want of this true conformity and indifferency. 5. This gives every thing I doe, leave, or ſuffer, a double grace, merit, and crown. O only ſweet, ſhort and ſure way! who would not leave, yea loath his own Will, for ſo many profits and pleaſures?

5. All Creatures doe the will of God.

5. What doe heaven and earth, Angels and Saints but Gods Will? What doe the ſouls in hell, but ſuffer for having done their own Wil? What did Chriſt Jeſus, and Bleſſed *Mary* upon earth? The one ſaid, *I came not to doe my own Will but his that ſent me*. The other ſaid, *Behold, O Lord, thy handmaid, doe with me as thou wilt*. I ſay alſo, with

with heart and mouth; *O my Lord, I am entirely thine, put me where thou wilt, give me what thou wilt, use me how thou wilt, so thou wilt goe with me, and give me leave to bear and embrace thee with the two arms of perfect conformity, and lively Confidence.*

6. What made the *Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins,* so constant and content, amidst their torments and trials? What made those *Saints* so couragiously to defy the devils (flocking about them like so many Lions and Monsters); *If God have given you power and permission over us, take us, devoure us, hurry us headlong into hell, we will not contradict his Will; but if not, why doe you labour in vain?* What made *Job* so patient on his dunghill? *Abraham* so resolute to sacrifise his son? And finally, what made *Christ* in his bloody sweat, to cry out; *Not my will, O Father, but thine bee done?* All this was caus'd by the Will of God, which they desired to follow and fulfill, to the last gasp and drop of their

6. Examples of this Conformity.

S. *Antony,* & others.

Lu. 22. 42.

their blood. *O holy and happy ſouls!* When ſhall I imitate you? *O my ſweet God*, that thou wouldſt ſay of me, as thou didſt of that *thy ſervant*; *I have found a man according to my heart*, who will doe whatſoever I will: Or that I could ſay as heartily as he did; *My heart is ready*, O God, to accept and execute thy holy Will in all things whatſoever! *O my Lord, let all ſelf-will and ſelf-love, hereafter dye in me! and let thy only Will and love remain and reign in my ſpirit; For I am moſt ſure, till I faithfully follow this rule, I ſhall never find reall peace or content.*

David.

The 29. Maxim.

That Vnquietneſs of mind is the bane of Devotion, and curſe of Contemplation.

Diſquiet is not a ſingle evill.

FOr it is not a ſingle and ſimple temptation, but a *ſource whence many ſpring*, a monſter with many heads, and the greateſt evill, (ſin only

only excepted) which seizes on the soul; Let us therefore shun it with all possible speed and dilligence, and refuse to give it the least entrance into our hearts, upon what pretence soever.

How to prevent it.

If we perceive our selves inclin'd to be easily troubled; let us duly practise these two points: *First*, carefully fore-arm and fortifie our interiours, against all future contrarieties, crosses, and contingencies, by devoutly performing our morning prayers and exercises of Recollection. *Secondly*, prudently put off company and occasions of extroversion; bridle our tongues till the tempest be blown over, hide our selves in a corner, turn our souls to our Saviour, read something of devotion, and (in matters of moment) impart our minds to some vertuous friend, *&c.*

A rule to keep inward peace.

If we will alwaies keep internall peace, we must observe these three rules: *First*, We must doe nothing only to edify others, without a further end of God's honour; nor any thing, which may justly displease, distast,

diſtaſt, diſ-edify, or contriſtate them. *Secondly*, wee muſt not be eager, curious, or ſolicitous to pleaſe or ſatisfy our ſelves, yea or to perform our duty's to God-wards, by doing all things in print, perfectly and exactly. *Thirdly*, All our pleaſure muſt be to pleaſe God; yet wee muſt not pleaſe our ſelves in the pleaſure wee find in ſerving and pleaſing him. For generally it ſuffiſeth, that wee are heartily willing, and quietly carefull to ſerve our Creator, pleaſe him in all things, and diſpleaſe neither him nor any one in any thing · and ſo goe on in our Introverſion with perfect freedome and liberty, ſimplicity and purity, without further fears or reflexions.

We muſt curb importunate deſires.

Let us, I ſay, keep on ſoft and fair, according to order and obedience, in our exerciſes of Humility, recollection, and inward converſation with God; checking and curbing all importune pretenſions, deſires and reſolutions of doing ſtrange matters; and reſting content in what God ſends, and our poverty

poverty affords; neither running before his grace, nor beyond our own strength.

Let us leave all intermedling with others doings and affairs, looking only to our own care and charge, thinking all others more perfect than our selves; and being truly glad, that our dear Lord is purely loved and perfectly served by them: This is a sure way to avoid many stumbling blocks of our enemies; to begin to taste the joys of heaven in this life; to live without solicitude, and dye without fear or trouble. Of little medling comes great peace,

For the further practice of this important point, and to obtain this happy quiet and content of mind, Further practices of this point.

First, We must carefully avoid and contemn all curiosity, to see, hear, know, or have a hand in what concerns us not.

Secondly, we must labour to be, (as it were), blind, deaf, dumb, insensible; passing by all things, or letting them passe by us; For all is vanity, [*Salomon.*] One to one, [S. *Giles.*] My God and all, [S. *Francis.*]

Francis.] Whatsoever hath an end, is nothing, [*S. Tereſe*]. What is that to thee? follow thou me, [*Jeſus Chriſt.*]

Thirdly, What is it we will ſee, hear, or know? novelty, vanity, a tranſitory toy, a fooliſh fable, an impertinent object, a flying ſhadow, a falſe deceit.

Fourthly, to what end? Either it will defile our ſouls; or diſquiet our minds; or diſtract our ſpirits; or divert our intentions; or imprint idle images, or excite our paſſions; or renew our vitious affections: All which, are great hinderances in a ſpirituall and contemplative courſe. Ah! poor ſouls! what amiable and admirable light and love, doe we leave and loſe for a vain curioſity? *&c.*

The 30. Maxim.

That Croſſes are to be ſuffered, not ſought; to be taken, not made; to bee conceal'd, not complained of.

IT is far beter to take croſſes, when, where, and how we find them; than to make them our ſelves; for this is loſſe of time, and a nouriſhment of *Self-love*. Let us not therefore caſt our ſelves indiſcreetly upon difficulties, or ſeek out occaſions of humility and patience; but be ready to receive, and indifferent to accept ſuch as befall us, and wee ſhall find enough to doe.

Let us make as little outward ſhew as may be of our inward ſufferings; but keep that ſecret to our ſelves, till obedience and juſt reaſon induce us to reveal it, and then let us doe it ſimply, ſincerely, and religiedly. O what peace, what profit, what pleaſure, ſhall we find in this reall proceeding? Complaints

are commonly accompanied with self-seeking, and small troubles are sooner cured by quiet suffering, than much shewing or speaking of them. Doth this cross come from men; and is it not rather permitted and provided by our beloved Lord from all eternity, to purify us from pride, to purge us from the love of creatures, and to dispose us for heaven and happiness?

See the Conflict. ch. 10. n. 2.

The 31. *Maxim.*

That Temptations cannot hurt us, if we cast our whole care upon God.

4. Rules of practice.

When temptations, passions, repugnancies, or repinings, rage in the inferiour portion of our souls; wee are presently to reflect 1. That wee have made choice of God's love for our end, and resolve to stand to it till death. 2. That we must willingly submit to the trouble, as long as it shall please God to permit it. 3. That we must continue in our practices of piety

and

and Recollection, as if we felt no afflictions, neither thinking on them, nor fearing them; but assuring our selves that nothing can injure us, so long as wee rely upon God and resent our own weakness.

4. That Prayer may be our chief refuge, and support against all their surprisals: and therefore we may say briefly and heartily; *Perfect thy strength,* (O powerfull Lord,) *in my weakness; let thy mercy triumph on the throne of my misery: I detest from my heart whatsoever is contrary to thy holy will in this point N. and all things: I resign my self to suffer it, as long and in what manner thou pleasest, though never so cross to my crooked nature. Sweet Saviour remain with me, and let thy love reign in me, and then I neither want other company, nor desire further comfort.*

The 32. Maxim.

That Desolations, derelictions, afflictions, distractions, are to be transcended by generous Resolutions.

IN time of desolation, &c. we are not to dispute with our selves, nor examin the causes or circumstances of our sufferings, for we are then neither competent nor indifferent judges, but we must referr that untill the time of Prayer; talk not now with your passionate and partiall heart, but speak to God about some other thing; transcending and dissembling your trouble in some such manner; *Good God! when shall this Pilgrimage have an end? My life is a continuall warfare upon earth, wherein all is vanity, all is affliction of spirit, all is full of frailty, misery, instability.* O Lord, *what is man that thou shouldst mind him? a weak reed, wagg'd with every wind, and contristated with every little cross and contrariety, burden-*

some

somewhat himself, and troublesome to others, &c.

There is more profit, and less danger to suffer Desolation, than to abound with Consolation; to desire sensible love and contrition, than to feel it; to resist temptations, distractions, passions, with patience and resignation, than to have none at all.

It's a signe of high and heroick vertue, 1. To be *Resigned*, when it seems we neither are nor can be resigned. 2. To be *Patient*, when we are fullest of motions to anger. 3. To be *Humble*, meek and quiet, in time of sickness, serious business, multiplicity of employments. 4. To be *Constant* and invariable in all the diversities, and varieties of our own changeable humors, dispositions, inclinations, internal invitations, external instigations.

Let us not think we lose our time when we are involuntarily distracted in Prayer, but rather comfort our selves in being deprived of all comfort, because we then remain in *that* state in *which* God would have us.

Let us conceive our ſelves as within the walls of a ſtrong caſtle; without which are great noiſes, outcries, tumults, alarms, but we ſafe and ſecure within, ſleighting their vain attempts: If our deſires be to love God, and our intentions to be with him, and we hold no diſcourſe with other divertiſments, we have made a good and profitable Prayer, &c.

The 33. Maxim.

That Perfection conſiſts in putting off all Propriety, and putting on pure and naked Charity.

THis will make us love God above all things, and all things in and for him only; uniting our ſpirits to God, and in him to our neighbours.

The practice of this ſpirituall uncloathing of our ſouls.

Behold, *ô my Lord and love!* I generally and totally renounce all things but thee; caſting my ſelf into the arms of thy moſt holy diſpoſi-

tion

tion and protection: *O my soul!* return sweetly to thy seat of rest; repose quietly and confidently in the bosom of Divine bounty; Remain here without diverting or distracting thy self to other objects; Rely securely upon his mercy and providence, cutting off incontinently all superfluous cares and solicitudes, and protesting thou desirest nothing but the advancing of his honour, accomplishing of his will, his love, and himself.

Take courage, *my naked soul!* for if thou art uncloathed sometimes, and deprived of thy Lovers embraces, feelings of his comforts, and pleasures of his presence, it is only, that himself alone may purely possess thee. *O my Lord and lover!* Look upon this soul, which I have endeavoured to strip entirely from all sensuall affection: therefore I have not only abandoned, but hated, Father, Mother, brethren, sisters, lands, living, liberty, yea and my own life, that I might become thy disciple: And were it yet to do again, I would cast off Mother, and

run over Father to come to thee my loving Jesus: Confirm, *O Lord*, my courage! Live O rich nakedness! Live my beloved to me and I to him! Let me see no one but only Jesus! Let alone his other gifts, though never so excellent and holy, I am indifferent to leave them or keep them, in the manner and measure he pleaseth; 'tis naked Jesus I only seek and sigh after.

Uncloath me then, *my Lord*,
1. Of all sin, great and small. 2. Of all affection to it, even the least venial. 3. Of all curiosity. 4. Of all sensuality. 5. Of all inordinate passion. 6. Of all vanity. 7. Of all self-love and self-will. Let me be reduc'd to nothing; Put off my self, and put on me thy self crucified; Deprive me of all that distasteth thee; that thou mayest
Mat. 12. 18 say of me, *This is my beloved son in whom I please my self*: This is my disciple whom I Jesus love; This is my rest for ever; Here I will dwell, because I have made choice of it: In this heart, is my harbor, there you shall infallibly find me.

The

The 34. Maxim.

That Zeal and eagerness must be temper'd with Moderation and discretion.

WE must moderate our natural vivacity, activity, and agility of spirit, by shunning all precipitation, and indiscreet forwardness and fervour: Soft and sure; Let us look before we leap: Let us take our eyes in our hands; For that which is well done is twice done, and a thing warily begun, is well nigh half brought about. Let us lend our hands, and not give our hearts to any work; Let us endeavor to perform all our actions with a free and disinteressed mind, without which all is drudgery and slavery.

Let us not be over eager: Perfection consists not in multiplicity of action, but in simplicity of intention; not in variety of exercises and devotions, but in peace of mind, and purity of heart; not in saying

ing or doing much, but in ſuffering and loving much, *&c.*

Let us ſometimes check our importunate ſpirit, as Jeſus did *Martha*: *Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things*, when as there is but *one thing* only neceſſary, which is, A real, cordiall, and totall Abnegation of thy ſelf in all things.

Luc. 10. 41

Let not indiſcreet zeal ſerve for a cloak to cover our paſſionate hearts, and inward hatred of others: True Zeal is ful of compaſſion free from indignation; and perfect charity either will not ſee what is amiſs in others, or ſeek out the beſt interpretation of it; excuſing the fault, and pittying the party.

The 35. Maxim.

That we muſt never rely upon our own naturall judgement, experience, and knowledge.

THis hath deceived many, and caſt them headlong into confuſion & deſpair: hence ſo many Apoſtaſies

stasies, rebellions, dissensions, divisions and scandals in Religion: O how pleasant, beautifull, and edifying a thing is it, to see persons of great perfection, glorious endowments, venerable for age, honourable for learning, renowned in dignity, &c. to be truly humble, supple, simple, soft like Wax, capable of any impression, and condescending to others reason and command. *Blessed are the meek*, humble, and obedient spirits; for God will not permit them to goe astray, or be deceived.

The 36. Maxim.

That we must seek no comfort in any creature.

FOr the practice of this; We must cheerfully forsake all, and be content to be forsaken by all: resting only in God, by prayer, patience and confidence. *Adieu friends, familiars, Confessours, counsellours, books, exercises, Angels: Welcome solitude, crosses,* The practice.

eclipses,

eclipſes, ſhames, wounds, wants, darkneſſes, deſolations, deaths: Yes, O Father becauſe thou ſo pleaſeſt. Is the creature in which I delight more loving, lovely or beautifull than God my Creator? Hath it been more bountifull or beneficiall to me? Can it more juſtly require, or more liberally requite my love? Can it make me holy or happy, quiet or content? Shall I leave light for darkneſs, life for death, ſubſtance for ſhadows, All for nothing? Anſwer impartially, and reſolve effectually.

The higher practice.

The higher practice of this Maxim, in order to Contemplation, is,

Read the Spir. Con. ch. 4. n. 3.

To eſtimate things according to their reall value: And then, Alas! what comfort can a devout ſoul, which hath taſted the ſweets of her beloved in Contemplation, find in the beſt of creatures? How far are they from affoording her any ſolid and ſubſtantiall ſatisfaction in her ſpirituall ſorrows, ſadneſs or deſolation!

Therefore

Therefore she wisely and carefully keeps her self to holy Recollection, resigns her self absolutely to the divine pleasure, continues stedfastly in the presence of her Creator; seeks to treat with him one to one; and leaves worldlings to follow their appetites, as *the horse and mule which are void of understanding*. Oh! how much more happiness is it to suffer in the sweet company of God, than to enjoy all such false and phantastical pleasures, as all creatures can confer, in the company of men: *My soul refuseth this comfort, I remember my God, and in him I am only delighted.*

The true Contemplatives are never sad or solicitous.

And indeed, they who faithfully and fervently addict themselves to *spirituall Recollection*, are neither sad nor solicitous, but only in shew: For what can they want, who are with God? In him they find gardens to walk in, fountains to bath in, pallaces to dwell in, dainties to feed on, and all pleasures to delight in, with such infinit advantages, that they ravish'dly cry

cry out, *My God and All*: These contemplatives need not your compassion, *O worldlings!* They are not so drownd in melancholy, so plung'd in sorrow, so little enjoying themselves, as you esteem and censure? No, your own poor souls are seriously to be pitied, which are so wide of wisdom, and so wedded to sensuality, as to relinquish true life and liberty, sincere comfort and content, for the shadows & smokes of the world: For this is most certain, that whosoever leaves *Recollection* to look after earthly *consolation*, enjoys neither God nor the world; whereas a soul which retires her self from the world to possess God, enjoys truly both God and the world together.

The 37. and last Maxim.

That we must walk, and persever, in these our Spiritual Exercises, with the two feet of Faith and Obedience.

To perform this we must	1. Leave all for one.	All others for God	By recollection.
	2. Leave one for all.	Our selves for God	By abnegation.
	3. Leave one and all.	God himself whé he withdraws himself,	By resignation.

The practice of this Maxim consists in these five points.

The practice.

1. TO have an ardent desire, affection, and intention, to love, see, please, and enjoy God.

2. To curb our senses from all curiosity, vanity, apprehensions, *&c.* which may either defile our souls, or disturb our minds, or distract our spirits; Either seduce us from the right way, or affright us when wee are in it.

3. Then we must take *Jesus* by the

the right hand, by faith and confidence, abandoning our ſelves totally to his mercy, and reſting in his providence, with a filiall indifferency.

4. We muſt take our *ſpirituall guide* by the left hand, by punctuall obedience.

5. In our way, wee muſt have theſe or the like thoughts, recollections, and devotions. *Well*, I am going to heaven; to my Father and Creator; to my eternall reſt and Center; to ſee, love and praiſe my God for evermore. There only is true life, true love, true light, and true liberty: *O Jeſu!* how long! *O Jeruſalem*, when!

Jeſus is with me, and for me, him I will follow, after him I will ſigh, and for him I will ſuffer, come what can. If I erre, let my *guide* look to it, for I am obedient; If I ſtumble, *Jeſus* will not let me fall, for I am faithfull.

If I cannot have the fruit of *Penance*, I will keep that of *Obedience*; What I cannot get by *Recollection*, I will procure by *Reſignation*;

What

What I want by *Indifference*, I will supply by *Confidence*; though my *Deserts* fail, my *Desires* shall prevail. What hath an end, is nothing. Live Eternity!

Sometimes let us hearken to *Jesus* speaking. O my child, my servant, my spouse: *What are all things to thee? follow thou me:* Let all pass, I am here: All is *one*, and *One* is all; trouble not thy self with multiplicity. Be silent, and I will answer for thee; be content, I am thy sufficiency; Be indifferent, all is my will; be confident, all is wel: I forgive thee all thou demandest; I will give thee all thou desirest; I will never desert thee, nor withdraw my eys, hand, heart, from thee; therefore goe on quietly, couragiously, confidently.

Other times let us answer him meekly and faithfully: *O good Jesu!* save me, for I am thine; *O sweet Saviour*, support me, for I am weak; *O loving guide*, direct me, for I am blind, *&c.*

Thus boldly let us keep on our way, 1. Letting passe all, by insensibility.

ſibility. 2. Out-paſſing all, by fervour. 3. Paſſing under all, by humility. 4. Paſſing over all, by generoſity and elevation of ſpirit.

Under this Maxim, are ſolv'd many materiall doubts ariſing in our daily progreſs to perfection.

The firſt Doubt.

If we fear that God will forſake us, by reaſon of our Ingratitude and diſloyalty?

'Tis true, we have been, are ſtill, and ever ſhall be ungratefull, tepid, and defective in our correſpondencies to the divine love and light; and God may in juſtice forſake us, and yet be a good God; but wee muſt be confident in his mercy that he will not do it, *for Jeſus ſake*, in fury and rigour; though hee may ſometimes withdraw the feelings of his preſence to try our loyalty: *His holy will be done*: Let us never ſay, *God will forſake us*; but ſay, *We will never forſake God*: Let us firſt ſay, Doth God

God love us? who can doubt it? And doe we love him? If we will, we doe. Let us never say, We shall never amend, all is lost; But let us often say, *We are sinners*, wicked, wretched, weak, none more than we: but it truly grieves us to be so; we will endeavour to remedy all; sure we are, our God is Almighty, all-mercy, all-meekness, *him* we will serve, and *in him* we will trust in despite of nature, and maugre the devill; and *for him* all desolation, and death it self is most welcome unto us.

The 2. Doubt.

If our sins trouble us, in respect of Confession and Satisfaction?

LEt us cast off servil fear; and be confident that what is past is pardoned, by Gods mercy and our humble confession; & what is to come may be prevented by Gods grace and our dilligence and endeavours.

The

The 3. Doubt.

If wee can neither Pray with fervour, nor Suffer with patience; neither feel God present, nor be content in his absence?

LEt us have recourse to these four things, which will supply our defects, and satisfy for our faults. 1. Obedience. 2. Resignation. 3. Confidence. 4. Good desires. Therefore in all our fears, crosses, and troubles, let us make use of these four points in this or the like manner. The practice.

O my Lord God, who deservest from me all love and honour, and whom I desire to serve with all my soul; behold I come out of confidence in thy mercy, having no other end, but only to please and praise thee: wherefore I resign my self to thy will, beseeching thee to turn all to thy glory and my good.

The

The 4. Doubt.

If we are doubtfull that God is angry with us, that we want grace, that we only seek our selves, that we yield to all temptations? &c.

LEt us build upon these three foundations: Humility in acknowledging our own deformity; Sincerity in confessing it; and Confidence of pardon for it: and so persevering constantly and couragiously in a course of Prayer, according to direction and obedience, we shall soon find ease, rest and peace.

The 5. Doubt.

If our Consciences are unquiet, and our souls fearfull, by reason of our proness to sin? &c.

LEt us Apply these following plasters, and put these tents into our spiritual wounds, as deep as we can, every day for a time, till the cure be perfected.

1. Let

Plasters for a troubled conscience.

1. Let us be assured that we are now at this present in the state of grace (supposing we have already, or are now resolv'd to do what is necessary for the expiation of our past sins, and the avoiding all sins for the future.)

2. That having a will to please God, and perform our duties, our Prayers are profitable to us, and acceptable to God, and we may without presumption take courage and comfort, though we are yet full of passions and imperfections.

3. That the feeling of troubles, fears, temptations &c. are neither sins in us, nor signs of Gods anger against us.

4. That we are not bound to reflect continually whether we have consented to sin or not; nor to judge whether this or that consent be mortall or veniall: Nor to meddle with the sins of our life past, having endeavoured to discharge our consciences once of them in Confession.

5. That we may and must convert our hearts to God at any time, humbly

humbly and confidently, in what estate so ever we be, without hesitation or apprehension, preferring his will before our own quiet.

6. That in saying our Office, or Prayers, it sufficeth that we have a good intention to praise and please God, and satisfie our obligation, using moral diligence in driving out bad thoughts, and we need trouble our selves no further.

7. That so long as we make choyce of God for our God, and of his will for our only end; and can say cordially, *I love God, I will no sin*; we need fear nothing.

8. That we are not bound to do still that which our Conscience dictates, or what our fancy tells us is a divine call; for this is the way never to have true peace, and to be ever subject to illusions. Therefore let us follow the old, simple, and secure rule: 1. *Trust and* 2 *Obey*, 3 *Let pass, and* 4 *Pray*: these will prove our safest haven in the Sea of this world, and our heaven upon earth; thus we may enjoy the peace of God, and lodge in our

The old plain rule: Trust and obey, Let pass and Pray.

hearts the God of peace; be blind, and yet ſee God.

Note well, that theſe aforeſaid warrants, are to be followed according to diſcretion, and with the approbation of our ſpirituall director.

The 6. Doubt.

If we are full of fears and apprehenſions of our eſtate, by reaſon we feel in our ſouls ſuch ſlender effects of Gods grace and love, and have little devotion, no inward peace? &c.

Such ſouls can never be cured, till they ſubmit their judgements, look with more confidence upon Gods mercy, and ſeek leſs their own ſatisfaction and aſſurance: For, this is an infallible truth, *That in this life* (without revelation), *we can have no certainty of our eſtate, but muſt ſtill live in ignorance as to that knowledge*; to hold the contrary is an *hereſie*, and to ſeek it inordinately is *ſelf-love and curioſity*. We muſt therefore work our ſalvation

An infallible maxim.

salvation betwixt fear and hope; and if we should see or feel any thing in our selves which should make us secure, it were very suspitious and dangerous.

Let us humbly observe these three points. 1. Resolve still to serve and please God in the best manner we can. 2. Resign our selves to his will and divine ordinance, for time and eternity, without further reflexions. 3. Build upon the word and warrant of our guide, and rest quiet and confident. They who seek more knowledge and satisfaction by feelings and reasons, seek but their own trouble and ruine; and if we find not here peace and comfort, we may thank our selves, since it is our *disobedience and self-seeking* which causeth it.

Read *Blosius, in spec. spirituali. cap. 7.* Read the *Imit. of Christ. l. 3. cap. 59.*

The 7. Doubt.

If some extream cross, calamity, or affliction, hath seized our hearts? &c.

LEt us hasten to our Lord God with an humble and confident

affection, and placed before him,

The practice. 1. Kiſs the Crucifix, ſaying, *O my dear Lord, O my ſweet Jeſus, O my all and only good!* 2. Then tell him you are troubled, as you would tell your Spirituall directour, and that you know not what to ſay or do. 3. Acknowledge heartily that you deſerve no comfort, but to have *heaven* ſhut againſt you, and *hell* let looſe to torment you. 4. If you would ſeek comfort, you would not have it out of him, or in any thing contrary to his Divine Will and liking. 5. Then ſay; *O Lord, I have no other Phyſician for my ſoul but thee, behold my wounds; thou art my Father, behold my wants; thou art my only Friend, behold my wiſhes and deſires:* then expoſe them unto him, and hearken what counſel and comfort he will give you. 6. Take again the *Croſs*, kiſs it, embrace it, reſign your ſelf to ſuffer; 7. And with an internall act of indifferency, being confident that *this croſs* and trouble is *his will*, and will be for your good, deſire to bear it and whatſoever elſe he ſhall lay upon you,

you, knowing he will enable you to do it. 8. Have no recourse to creatures for your contentment, but drink purely and plentifully at the fountain head: and be not weary; you suffer for eternity.

The 8. Doubt.

If we desire to conquer the Devil, and overcome all temptations whatsoever?

LEt us often read, observe, and practise these generall Remedies. General Remedies against temptations.

The first is, A strong courage, and firm resolution, to fight and get the victory, and not to yield even to our last gasp. The 1. Remedy. *If we resist the Devil, he will fly from us*; if we fear him, he will follow us, and insult over us; If we play the Pigmeys, he will play the Lion; but let us be Lions, and he will soon shew himself a coward: Let us then fight manfully as befits Christs Souldiers, to give him the honour, and the Devil the terrour, who is already Jam. 4. 7.

S. Hierom. Thou maist perswade, but canst not precipitate.

chained to our hands, *and may bark, but cannot bite*, unless by blindness and madness we come within his reach.

Let us remember in our combats, that *we are made a spectacle to* 1 Cor. 4. 9. *God, his Angels, and all his heavenly court*: who would not fight valiantly and confidently before such spectators? *God* beholds us, as our *Judge* to reward and crown us if we overcome; *Christ* as our *Captain* helps us to overcome; *all the rest* pray for us that we may 2 Par. 32. 7 overcome. *Fear not my soul, there are more with us than against us: God* and his Angels *are on our side, who can withstand us?*

Let us further reflect, that we plead not only our own cause, but Gods; whom in our persons the Devil seeks to injure and dishonor: Let us then rather dy than suffer our good Masters honour to be staynned by our cowardise; our dearest blood will be well spilt for such a King and countrey? Oh! what privilege, *to suffer for Jesus sake!* Psal. 42. *Arise Lord, let thy enemies be dis-*

perse d,

porsed, judge thine owu cau,e. Thine is the quarrell, We are thy Champions.

Let us also ponder well what S. *Paul* tells us on Gods part; That *he is faithfull in his promises, and will not permit us to be tempted beyond our strength*, but will draw our good out of our temptations: he knows what mold we are made of, what force we have, and (which is above all) he loves us as the *apple of his eye*: If he seems sometimes to sleep a while, yet he both sees and succours us. Courage therefore, if we be already *at hell-gates, he can & wil bring us back again*, if we walk *amidst the shadows of death, let us fear no ill, &c.* 1 Cor. 10. 13. Psal. 22. 4.

The second Remedy, is, A distrust in our own forces, and trust in Gods help. *God protects them that hope in him*; and the generall reason of the Scripture why God helps his servants, is, *because they hope and trust in him*; so that his honour becomes interessed, if we rely upon his succour: whereas if we trust to our own forces, we have little to do The 2. Remedy. Psa. 17. 31

with God; and challenging much to our selves, quickly fall into blindness of heart, unless God bring us to the acknowledgement of our own nothing by some strong affliction, and make us cry out with *Job*, *There is no help for me in my self.*

The 3. Remedy. Mat. 26. 41

The third Remedy, is Prayer: *Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation.* Let us turn our hearts to converse with God, which is better than to reflect upon our temptations and troubles. Let us be so attentive to him, that we have neither leave nor leasure to give ear to devilish suggestions, but transcend them by a generous resolution, rather to dy than admit any thing contrary to our Lords love and pleasure.

The 4.

The fourth Remedy, is, To observe the root, groundwork and occasion of the temptation, and to pull it up, cut it off and destroy it.

The 5.

The fifth Remedy, is, to cure one contrary by another. If we be tempted to Pride, let Humility be our aym; let us never cease from speaking, writing, reading, meditating

ting, praying and practising it, till we get an habitual loathing of pride.

The sixth Remedy, is, to Resist at the beginning, when it is yet weak. Let us kill the *Cockatrice* in the shell, lest being hatched it poyson us; let us be wise, and not save a penny, to pay a pound, nay to lose all we are worth eternally. 6. Resist at the beginning.

The seventh Remedy, is, to reveal it to him who is incharged with our souls: this diminisheth our grief, lessens our trouble, is an act of humility meriting grace and comfort, and confounding our enemy, who cannot brook to have his deceits discovered. 7. Reveal it.

The 8. Remedy, is, to avoid Idleness: *Let the Devil always find us well employed*, and we shall easily avoid his temptations; *He that is idle hath ten Devils* to impugn him, *he that is well busied, hath but one*: Let us therefore distribute certain exercises for all times, that we may be sure to avoid this mother of all sin and mischief, and the greatest bane of our souls, *Idleness*. 8. Avoid Idleness. This was the rule of the *Egyptian* Monks.

The 9. Doubt.

If we want Comfort in long and dangerous temptations and troubles?

LEt us consider what Experience and Scriptures teach us: Job. 7. *That the life of man is a continuall warfare.* James. 4. That *wars and commotions are within us from our concupiscences and originall corruption.* Rom. 7. That *there is a law in our Members, rebelling against the law of our minds,* Eccles. 12. That *when we are resolv'd to give our selves to Gods service, we must prepare our hearts for temptation.* 2 Cor. 12. 8. The great Apostle and vessell of election *was sore tempted,* and shall we poor worms, and sensuall creatures, wonder to feel contradiction and combats in our nature?

Let us not deceive our selves, thinking to find present quiet, as soon as wee convert our selves to God by prayer, for then chiefly the Devill will storm, the Flesh rebell, the

the World murmure, when they most fear to lose their possession: And if it were not so, what need such *continuall Mortification?* Coloss. 3. 5

Why did our heavenly Master teach us to pray *that we might not be led into Temptation?* Luc. 11. 4.

Christ himself *was tempted*, and why should we be dismayed? Are we less pleasing to God for that wee are tempted, and not rather more acceptable for suffering for his sake? *Thou erreſt, brother* (says St. *Jerome*), *if thou thinkeſt a Christian can be ever free from perſecution; thou art then moſt dangerously impugned, when thou knoweſt not that thou art impugned.* For *all they who will live devoutly, ſhall ſuffer perſecution*; whereas others, who live sensually may seem to feel no rebellion: because having nothing of Gods Spirit in them, their enemies find nothing to war against. Mat. 4. 1. St. *Hierom* ad *Heliod.* 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Let us not then be troubled that we are tryed with Temptations; for it is a most assured sign that we fight not under the Devils banner, but

but are revolted against him; who persecutes not his Friends but his Enemies, &c.

The 10. Doubt.

If we wonder that God will have us suffer Temptation: sithence our frailty is subject to yield, and so offend his divine Majesty?

HE hath good Reason; 1. Lest we should become careless in our duties: Therefore he tels us, *I have forsaken thee for a moment, but I will return and recall thee, and be mindfull of thee in my eternall pitty*: What is a moment in respect of Eternity; wherein hee means to overflow us with delights, in his own kingdom? &c. 2. Lest we should take this place of banishment for our Country, this Pilgrimage for our Paradise, &c. 3. To purge us for our past follies, sins, and ingratitudes, to satisfy for future Purgatory, and to prepare and perfect us for a Crown of glory. 4. To make us truly *wise*, truly

Isay 54.

Ne viator tendens ad patriam amet stabulum pro domo sua. S. *Aug.*

2. Tim. 2. 12.

Pro. 17. 3.

Revel. 2. 17.

truly humble, truly vertuous. 5. To keep us in exercise: for many would otherwise neglect *prayer*, slight *obedience*, and shun *mortification*, whereas now they stand carefully upon their guards. 6. To teach us how to help our neighbours by our own trials: *whereas he that hath never been tempted, what knows he*, either for himself or others? Isay 28. 19. Eccluſ. 43.

The 11. *Doubt.*

If we are ſolicited by our enemy to Unchaſtneſs?

1. KNow, that *God hath called us to ſerve him with purity* and integrity of body and ſoul: this is the end of our Vocation, *Let us look how we walk worthy of it*, leſt that terrible ſentence of the holy Ghoſt be pronounced againſt us; *He hath done wickedly in the land of Saints, he ſhall not ſee Gods glory*, which none can ſee but *clean eyes*. Read and put in practice the 11. chap. of the Spir. Con. Iſay. 26. 10.

2. Let us comfort our ſelves in this; That as it is not *ſinfull* but *naturall* Wiſdom. 8. 21.

naturall to feel rebellious motions; So it is not only possible, but easy to overcome them; not in our selves, but *in God the gracious giver of strength and comfort.*

Philip. 4. 6 I can doe all things in God my comforter.

3. Let us have an ardent desire to live *chast*, and make firm and frequent resolutions so to continue what ever it costs us: How many thousand chast spouses of God, made of the same mould that wee are, keep perpetual integrity? *&c.*

4. Let us seek diligently, and practise seriously such Remedies, as are proper for the preservation of this *Jewell.* Amongst which the chiefest is Mortification of our rebellious flesh by Austerities: hence S. *Thomas* cals Chastity from chastising: *It is better our Stomakes pain us, than our Consciences*, and *that we lose health of body, than purity of soul, and salvation of both.* This remedy of *Mortification* is absolutely necessary when carnall motions arise first in the body, and thence redound into the Imagination: but if from the Fancie they descend to the body, we are to apply

S. *Thomas of Aquin.*

apply these following remedies: 1. Let us avoid *idleness*. 2. Let us change our *Employments*; if we are assaulted in company, let us seek solitude, if in solitude, let us hasten into company, *&c.* 3. *Silence, temperance and* custody *of senses*, are three powerfull preservers of Chastity. 4. Let us make *great account of little things*, and shake off the first Motions of this nature, as wee would a burning coale from off our new garment. 5. Ler us humbly (but modestly and discreetly) lay open their nature and manner to our spirituall guide. 6. Let us carefully avoid all suspected company, familiarity, meetings, *&c.* though our intention be never so spirituall. 7. Let us strive rather to slight, scorn, and neglect these temptations, than formally to resist them.

Amor otiosorum negotium.

S. *Ephrem.*

5. In vehement temptation. 1. Make the sign of the cross upon your heart. 2. Use some brief and burning aspirations; as, *Lord, deliver me. I suffer violence*; O my God, *answer for me. I am thine*, O Jesu, *body and soul, help me.* 3. Defy the

Isay 38. the Devill with St. *Antony*: *Fy beast! thou wert an Angell: I who am now a beast, will aym to be an Angell, and get thy lost place: be gone, the lodging is already taken up; Jesus is here, who is my Lord and love, I am preingag'd in a former and purer affection.*

St. Antony.

6. Let us prepare before-hand certain places of refuge for our shelter and succour till the storm be pass'd over. 1. *The presence of God and his Angels*; saying, *How is it possible? God sees me, and shall I sin in his sight?* 2. Death and eternity; *The delight is momentary, the punishment is eternal; death is at my dore, and shall I adventure?* 3. Christs sacred wounds; let us there hide and secure our selves, and say, *My God hangs on the Cross, and shall I think of taking my pleasure?* 4. The love of God; *O Jesu! my love and my life! I will either love thee, or love nothing at all; Let me rather lose my life than thy love.* 5. Humility; *Thou art just, O my Lord God; thy will be done. My Pride is cause of this*

villany

villany which I feel, &c. And take this for an infallible truth; wee must be *humble*, or we shall not be long *chast*: Let us be *obedient* to our *Superiors*, or let us not look to have our *flesh obedient* to *our spirits*. 6. *Devotion to Saints* excelling in this vertue, especially to the *chastest Virgin Mary*.

We must be humble, or we shall not be long chast.

7. The last Remedy, is, to make use of these antidotes timely, orderly, and discreetly, without which no rules, documents, or directions will ought avail us.

The 12. Doubt.

If we are in extraordinary Desolation and darkness?

WE must live by *Faith* in this case: and know that a *sensible choice* of God and goodness, is not now necessary; but a Rationall adhering to him is sufficient. Our fidelity to God, is shew'd, in the performance of our duties now as at other times; without losing either our Confidence in him, or seeking

seeking Comfort in our sufferings; but aspiring, if not sweetly, yet sincerely, in this or the like manner: *Lord I choose thee, and accept of thy divine pleasure and providence in all things. I reject whatsoever may possess that place and dominion in my soul, which is due to thee alone. Dispose of me and mine, as shall be most for thy honour and glory. Let me be either all thine, or nothing at all.*

The 13. *Doubt.*

If wee are tempted to despair of Gods mercy, by reason of our frequent falls, and relapses into sin?

THis grievous Malady springs from three causes or errors: For they who are troubled in this point, doe not truly weigh, 1. What God is. 2. What sin is. 3. What contrition and sorrow of heart is.

1. Almighty

1. Almighty God is a boundless and bottomless Sea of mercy; he is natural bounty it self; he is ever ready to receive, revive and relieve a penitent soul, though she alone had committed a thousand times a day the sins of the whole world. He considers not what she hath been, but what she desires and resolves now to be: and who so denys his power or Will to pardon sinners, as often as there are moments in time, goes about to deprive him of his honor and divinity it self; for he could not be God if he were not good, and faithfull in his promise. *O loving Lord God who art not only ready to receive a penitents petition, but even wooest him to present it; Who can truly consider what thou art, and despair of thy mercy?* 2. Sin is a voluntary and deliberate Aversion from God, and Conversion to creatures. 3. Contrition is of that efficacy, that it delivers from all sin, giving confidence of pardon for the past, and courage to avoid it for the future. Let us apply this to our comfort.

1. What God is.

2. What sin.

3. What Contrition.

The

The 14. Doubt.

If we are perplexed with great sadness?

THis Passion, is a great hindrance to devotion and perfection; it is the bait of the Devil, the bane of our spirits, the root, mother, and nursery of infinite miseries and mischiefs.

The causes of sadness.

The *chief causes of Sadness*, are these,

1. Nature.

1. Nature, *when Melancholy over-sways the sanguin humour*, this can neither merit nor demerit, but the Devil takes thereby occasion to fill our spirits with unquietness. These have need aswell of corporal as spiritual Physick.

2. Self-love.

2. A tenderness of heart, *and passionate love of our selves*: we cannot brook the least contradiction, *&c.* but we sigh and sob, as if all the world were interessed in our misfortune, and should bear a part in our dolefull ditty. The Remedy were

were to bid such weep on for their penance, or use some coporall austerity.

3. An *immortification of our Passions*, which (when we seek in good earnest to root out), assault us so strongly, that it seems impossible to cure them, and hence we grow sad. The Remedy is, to conquer this bad nature by counsell, courage, and diligence, *&c.* Let us pray heartily, suffer willingly, stoop humbly; 'Tis for heaven we fight and suffer. 3. Passions

4. A *secret root of pride*, vain esteem, and false opinion we have of our selves, when things fall not out according to our liking, expectation, or importunate desire; whereupon, we grow sad and troubled. Surely *the proud have no true rest, there is no peace to the wicked*. Let us Remedy it therfore *by learning of Christ true humility*, and meekness, out of which there is no hope of quiet. 4. Secret Pride. Isay 48. 22

5. An *indiscreet Zeal*, and over-greediness of perfection, which makes us eat more than we can dis- 5. Indiscreet zeal.

gest

geſt, and ſo caſt it up again with great pain. undertaking auſteritie, exerciſes, introverſion, *&c.* beyond our capacities without counſel; and ſo we remain afflicted, being unable to go forward, and aſhamed to go backward. Let us Remedy this by *humble obedience* to a diſcreet guide.

6. Inſtability of heart.

6. *Want of fervor in our vocation*, inſtability of heart, and inconſtancy in our exerciſes, leaving, changing, interrupting them through lazineſs or lightneſs; This leaves a worm gnawing upon our conſcience, with continual diſquiet and ſadneſs. Let us Remedy this with S. *Bernard.* S. *Bernards* counſel; *Wilt thou never be ſad? live well. A good man is alwayes merry*; *and a good conſcience is a continuall feaſt.*

7. Love to creatures.

7. Diſordinate *love and affections to creatures.* Let us love all only for God, and we ſhall be content and quiet in the loſs of the moſt lovely and beloved creature in the world: *God alone* will ſupply all other loves and loſſes.

8. An envious eye.

8. *A jealous and envious eye:* This

This is a dangerous and lamentable ross; For all the Perfections of others are ours, when we love them in others; but when we hate them, they are nails in our eys, and thorns in our hearts, which do extreamly torment us. *O madness!* Have we not sufficient miseries at home in our selves, but we must suck poyson like Spiders out of others Hony, and what is their crown, must be our ctoss? What greater wickedness than to pine away with grief at others good? The Remedy of this is by endeavouring to get *true Charity*, the property whereof, is to weep with the weepers, rejoyce with the joyfull, to love others good, as our own. Let us *avoid Curiosity* if we wil eschew Envy, for a *Curious eye* is the fewel of an Envious heart; let us remain like Bees in our hive of *Introversion*, & there make provision for the Winter of Death & Eternity, *&c.*

Parum tibi est, si ipse sis fœlix, nisi alter sit infœlix?

9. *Frequent failings in good purposes*, and relapses into sin. We question whether our sins past are pardoned, and are uncertain that our present Confessions are good;

9. Frequent relapses.

This

This is of one evil to make two; for we have done amiss, and now by losing Courage and confidence, we make our selves unfit to do better. Let us Remedy it, by *acknowledging our faults*, using violence to our selves, and following direction.

Other Remedies against Sadness.

Other Remedies against sadness.

Jam. 5. 13.

1. Prayer.

1. Prayer is a soveraign Remedy. *Is any one sad among st you? Let him pray.* God is our only joy and comfort: Let us lift up our hearts to him, and lay open our wants and desires before him with Resignation, who both can and will abundantly comfort us. *Ah! my poor soul, why art thou sad, and whence comes it that thou thus troublest me? Is not our God good and gracious, who hears thy sighs, and sees thy sorrow? what wanteſt thou, which he cannot or will not give thee, when he sees it most expedient for thee?*

2. Singing

2. Sometimes let us sing spiritual Songs; which greatly confound the Devil.

3. Other

3. Other times we may fitly divert our thoughts by some external *Recreations* or imployments. 3. Recreation.

4. Let us endeavour to make external and internal Acts with *fervour*, though without gust; as, embracing and kissing *a Crucifix*, and speaking reverently and lovingly unto it, *&c.* 4. Fervent acts.

5. A discreet taking of a *Discipline*, obtains wonderful comfort; for the soul is called from the inward troublesom pensiveness, to the outward pain: and the Devil flyes away, seeing his companion the Flesh so hardly handled. 5. A discipline.

6. Frequent *Communion* is an excellent cordiall, strengthning our hearts, and rejoycing our spirits. 6. Communion.

7. Let us *discover* the effects and manner of our sadness to our spiritual guide, and take his advice simply and humbly: *This is the remedy of remedies.* 7. Discovery of it.

8. Let us take heed of making use of these Remedies, only *that we may be at ease*, and avoid affliction; but for the prevention of danger which may ensue; and for the rest, 8. Indifferency.

remain perfectly *indifferent* and resigned.

9. Few desires. 9. If we will be free from Sadness, we must labour to keep far from us *unquietness of mind*; if we will have our minds quiet, we must have *few desires*, and those few only *to love and please God*.

10. Plain-dealing. 10. Finally let us beware of three things. 1. Of following our Sensuality, in meat, drink, talk, ease, *&c.* 2. Of vain Complacence, and self-opinion, *&c.* 3. And above all of Hypocondriacy, Hypocrisy, double dealing & sleights with our guide; for no mervail if he starves and pines away, *who lyes to the holy Ghost*. If we are simple as children, our loving Father will give us sweetmeats: *Wo be to Hypocrites, for it wil go il with them in the latter day.* Mat. 23. 13.

Another Antidote against Melancholy and Pusillanimity.

Pusillanimity proceeds from want, The reason of our being so often troubled and shaken, is because our *spiritual edifice* is not supported by these solid props.

1. of Faith 1. *Faith*: For if we captivate our

our Understandings to believe what *God* himself hath told us, what his *Church* hath taught us, and what our *ghostly guides* still preach unto us, how can we chose but be comforted and satisfied?

2. *Abnegation*: For if we have made good Confessions, have endeavoured to satisfy God, and our guide, and have a will to obey them in all things, we may rest secure: Let us not say, What shall become of us? Shall we persever? for the desire to know this, argues our hearts *of secret pride and propriety*: Let us therefore deny our selves, saying, *Gods holy will be done in and with us for all time and eternity, and what ever becomes of us, we will serve him till death, because his love deserves it: What need we seek a further security of Gods friendship towards us in this life, than to find in our souls these two things; First, for the time past, we have done penance, consisting in Confession, Contrition and Satisfaction: Secondly, for the time to come, we give our selves totally to God, to serve and please him the re-* 2. Of Abnegation.

siduc of our life, in the best manner possible. Let us put our souls in this estate, and go on with courage, and never more trouble our selves.

3. of Confidence.

3. *Solid Confidence.* For if we know God is mercifull and *Jesus* hath suffered enough for all sinners, (whereof we are the chief) how can we but hope that he will be our *Jesus*? Let us think thus: *God loves us, and we desire with all our hearts to love him, & we trust in his love, and for it we will both sigh and suffer, pray and obey, deny our selves, and dy to all creatures:* This sauce will disgest all our bitterness.

The 15. Doubt.

If we suspect that our Sadness, and temptations procced from our own fault or negligence, or some secret sin, or our want of correspondency with Gods grace? &c.

1. IF it be so; must we therefore complain, and not rather the more *conform our selves to Gods Will?* We have often deserved hell; Our past sins, and present negligen-

ses

ces merit eternal punishments; and is it not a special favour to be punish'd in this life with small troubles and temptations? This is not Hell; nor Eternity of discomfort, nor what we deserve; Why then are we not both Content and Gratefull?

2. In this fatherly chastisement there is both Mercy and Justice: *Justice*, because we have often shut the doors of our hearts against God, giving a deaf ear to his *calls*, and therefore it is just that we should now call and knock at the gate of his mercy, and not be heard: *Mercy*, because our sufferings are small in comparison of our deservings. If this be most true, why lament we our mis-fortune? Is there any proportion between time and eternity? betwixt this desolation, and the never-ending lamentations of the damned in hell?

3. Let us then receive and kiss his paternal rod with a filial reverence, crying out with S. *Augustin*: *O Lord, spare us not here, so thou spare us hereafter? We have merited Hel, and dare we ask Sweetness in prayer?* S. *Augustin*

O pride and presumption! *'Tis sufficient* Lord *that thou admittest us into thy presence, and permittest us to open our unworthy mouths unto thee, and lament our misery before thy Divine Majesty: And shall we have hearts to Murmure, or tongues to complain of any Usage?*

The 16. Doubt.

If we doubt that God is displeased with our Prayers; that our Afflictions befall us through our own occasion, and cannot satisfy our selves to think we have done what God requireth?

1. WE must firmly believe, that (besides our own fault which deserves it) our chastisement is a disposition of the most high and holy Providence of God, whose wisdom imparts his blessings as he knows best for his servants: If all receive not spiritual gust and joy in Prayer, let them say with S. *Bernard*, Give me O Lord, *Simplicity, Humility, and Charity*; but for higher favours, as I am unworthy of them, so I am uncapable to make

S. Bernard.

make use of them; I leave them therefore for thy special friends and favourites.

2. Let us therefore conceive these afflictions to be sent us from God, 1. To humble us: for should he visit us with great lights, and elevate us in Contemplation; we should presently take complacency in our imaginary devotion, and prefer our selves before others. 2. To try our Fidelity and perseverance in his love: for the *chief end of Prayer*, is to obey and please God, and offer him all that we are and have; but to receive relief and comfort is only *the secondary end.*

3. Let us further consider, that this very internal Trouble and anguish, may and ought to comfort us, as being a token of Gods *love*: for *Love* is the first wheel of our natural and spiritual clock, setting all the other passions a work; if therefore we grieve that we serve God so tepidly, *&c.* this Grief proceeds of *love*, and is an evident sign of a good will to serve him.

4. Let us ground our selves in

that often repeated Maxim; *That all things do not only befal us by Gods permission, but also that he sends them for our good*: And therefore let us say with confident and courageous *Judith*; *Take heart, for our God hath sent us these Afflictions to amend us, and not to destroy us.*

Jud. 8. 27.

The 17. Doubt.

If Nature hath shew'd her-self a Step-mother unto us, in giving us a hard and harsh disposition; whence proceeds a reluctancy to works of Vertue, and mortification of Vice; So that we distrust of ever overcoming our selves?

LEt us take courage: *The violent get the Kingdom of heaven*: And let us lay hold on these two Truths,

Mat. 11. 12.

Two verities.

1. That Gods will is, *all should be saved*; and therefore gives every one sufficient Grace and means to that end: if then we have the worst Nature in the world, and do but correspond diligently with that Grace which God gives us, we have no reason at all to fear. Let us *fight* valiantly under *Christ* our good

1. Gods will is, that all should be sav'd,

Captain

Captain, with the Armor of *Prayer and Mortification*, and not cease to be his *Souldiers* as long as any *blood and breath* remains in our bodies. Let us learn to discover, and then (as others do) to detest our own peevish and perverse disposition; Let us not flatter our selves, but lay the *ax* to the *root*, not to the *branches*; to wit, Resolve to humble our proud hearts in all occasions with *courage, constancy & confidence*, for one year, and we shall find more peace and quiet than we can imagin. *If we sweat drops of blood, it is for Eternity; where not one drop shall be lost, nor one wound uncounted, nor one Souldier uncrowned.*

2. *That to have bad natures, and to feel motions against grace, reason, &c. is neither Sin nor Imperfection*; so long as we yield not our consent to their leading, *&c.* 2. Bad natures are no sins, *&c.*

The 18. Doubt.

If on the contrary, our Nature is so facil and flexible, that we scarcely find difficulty in any thing; we won-

der to hear mention of Rebellions, Contradictions, Desolations, &c. from all which we are secure and quiet: And therefore we fear our actions are rather of a naturall promptitude, than solid Vertue?

'Tis true, that Devotion and Perfection consist not *in this external quiet and ease*; but in the Victory over our selves, in habits of solid Vertues, in pure Charity and Indifferency. We are therefore in this case to Humble our selves, and to conceive we know not what Mortification and Abnegation mean. What marvail if a soul, which is seldom *Introverted*, is rarely distracted? if they who have no care of their Senses, nor custody of their Hearts, are not troubled with their Evagations? If where there is no sap of solid Devotion, there is no sense of Dryness and desolation? O dangerous and unquiet Peace!

A dangerous peace.

The 19. Doubt.

If we so addict our selves to Recollection, that we look upon works of Obedience and Charity, and the externall practices of our duty, as impediments to Perfection?

Such *know not by what Spirit they are led.* Let us not vainly adhere to our imaginary Devotions, so as to neglect the least work of Obligation. Without Charity and Obedience, *all our prayers are abhominable* in his sight, who said, *Not every one that crys, Lord, Lord, shall enter into my Kingdome, but he that doth my Will,* &c. Luke 12. 25. Prov. 17. 15. Mat. 7. 25.

The 20. Doubt.

If wee find such a calm in our Passions, imperfections, and temptations, that wee hope the worst is past?

LEt us never flatter our selves with such fancies, or admit the least conceit, that we have intirely conquered any one passion or imperfection: Read the Conflict. ch. 26.

perfection: but humbly, vigorously, and constantly, keeping on in our track of Mortification, Recollection, Introversion; think that these calms, comforts, and cessations, are sent us as hony-sops, and milk for children, because we are yet weak, and want courage to encounter such stronger Temptations, wherewith others are tried; And that our Loving Lord, communicates these his favours and friendships unto us, not as best meriting them, but most needing them.

Time videre unde possis cadere; Noli fieri perversa simplicitate securus. S. Augustin.

The 21. *Doubt.*

If Scrupulosity overwhelms us?

AS *Carelesness* is a dangerous impediment of Perfection, when one shall say, *This is not Mortal, this is but a Counsell, not a Precept; this of Perfection, not of Obligation:* (For whosoever will obtain the true Spirit of Devotion and Recollection, must be far from this opinion:) So *Scrupulosity* is another extream, equally hindring our

our spirituall progress, and hurting more than sin it self.

For this trouble of Spirit, takes away all internall strength, comfort, and courage of well-doing, and makes us slide insensibly into Despair of doing better; till at length, we give up all, and either pine away in these melancholy and desperate thoughts, or else yeeld our selves to Pleasure and Sensuality, and sometimes to the Devill himself, to find some means of solace and satisfaction. Beleeve it, *inordinate Fear, Sadness, and Scrupulosity*, will soon bring a soul into a labirinth of miseries, and a hell of mischiefs; and therefore she must speedily get *Confidence in Gods mercy*, and raise up her self to *Alacrity of mind*, or she will never be able to overcome her difficulties, nor persever long in Spirit.

The danger of scrupulosity.

Confidence in Gods mercy is the remedy.

The way to get this Confidence and Joy, is briefly this:

1. To Trust and Obey her *discreet guide*: who is to assign her a set form of Confession for once a week.

The means to get this confidence.

week. 2. He must be resolute and rigorous, taking all *upon his own conscience*, if she promise faithfully to obey him. 3. He must assure her, that she more offends *in want of Confidence and Obedience*, than in all other sins; and that if she will not beleeve this, her disease is incurable. This is the short and safe cure of this dangerous Disease: but that we may better understand the nature of our malady, Let us Note *Seven sorts of Consciences.*

7. Sorts of Consciences.

1. A *cauteriz'd*, corrupted, large and libertine *Conscience*, making scruple of nothing, but swallowing down all things. 2. A *chiverell Conscience*, stretching to all, and caring for nothing, but to avoid great and grievous sins. 3. A *quiet Conscience*, yet not good, because they take occasion to sin out of a confidence in Gods goodness, and hope of his mery. 4. A *troubled Conscience*, but not good, for want of confidence. 5. A *troubled, and also a good Conscience*, yet weak; of those who being newly converted to God, lament their past life

with

with bitter tears, and yet are full of rebellious passions, &c. 6. A *good, quiet, and confident Conscience* of those who are carefull to please God, to avoid all sin, to be beneficiall to all, burthensome to none; making use of friends by favour, foes by patience, and all men by good will, &c. 7. An *erroneous, timorous and scrupulous Conscience*, making doubts and difficulties of all things.

So that there are, generally speaking, *two sorts of bad Consciences*: The one *too large*, calling good evill, and evill good; The other *too narrow*, finding sin where there is none, and taking imaginations for offences, and shadows for substances. 2. Sorts of bad consciences.

The first of these Consciences, (which is over large) must be cured by removing the causes, which are generally four. 1. Over large: Which must be cured by removing the causes.

1. *Negligence to learn what belongs to our Religion*, vocation, profession, obligation and salvation: for *who so knows not what he is bound to know, shall not be* 1 Cor. 14. 38.

known

known by God. 2. *Pride*, and shame to ask and inform our selves. 3. *Obstinacy and presumption*, when we will trust to our own judgements and abilities, and not submit to our betters. 4. *Bad affections*, and perverse wils, led by passion, and blinded with self-love, from seeing the truth. These have one foot already in hell; which they must pluck out by violence, using the contrary remedies.

2. Over-strait, which must also be cured by the removall of the causes.

The *Second Conscience*, which is over-strait, and scrupulous, may be also cured by the removall of the causes, which may be reduced to these. 1. *A fearfull nature*, coming from a boundance of cold; here is need of a twofold Physitian, One for the Body to prescribe them good diet; The other for the Soul, to confirm them *in Hope*, by the consideration of Gods mercy, Christs merits, Scriptures promises, Superiors warrants, *&c.* 2. *Some infirmity* or sickness, as *Mania*, which hurts the forepart of the head, and diminishes the Imagination; *Melancholy*, which infects

fects the middle part, and diminisheth Reason; *Phrensy*, which seizeth on the purses or nets of the brain, which are the cells of Judgement. This cause hath need of the like cure. 3. *The Devill*, by Gods permission, for divers causes. This is cured by not caring what humour we are in, but to endeavour with courage and confidence to please God, whether we are sad or merry, fervent or desolate; making use of Prayer and Counsell. 4. *An indiscreet* and prepostorous *treating of our bodies.* The way to cure this is to follow the rules of Discretion, and to find out their own strength and complexion; yet still taking heed of the contrary extremity, of flattering our sensuality under pretence of spirituality. 5. *The keeping company with scrupulous persons*, or misunderstanding some Spirituall *Books.* Remedy this by shunning such Company, laying aside such Books, and obtaining from your Director, a Rule to rely upon, and beleeving nothing against that. 6. A secret and subtill

Self-love

Self-love and Pride, under the counterfeit mask of fear and care of our ſouls. Againſt which we muſt *ſubmit* our judgment to *Obedience*; for we are all blind in our own cauſe; and this is not only the beſt, but even the neceſſary Remedy, for ſuch as are particularly bound to Obedience. 7. *Ignorance of the myſteries of our faith*, and of Gods mercy, which makes us think our obligation greater than indeed it is, God more ſevere than he is, and his yoak more heavy than it is. Which to Remedy, we muſt ſee and conſider wherein we judge amiſs, and whereupon wee ground our particular fears; for that is the eaſieſt way to remove them. 8. Let us weigh the vertue of the Phyſick which muſt cure our Diſeaſe: to wit, Firſt, *the infinit goodneſs of God, and Chriſts merits*. And what Soul can fear, having ſo gracious a God, and ſo great a Ranſome? 2. The Credit and Compaſſion of the *Bleſſed Virgin*, and the Prayers and Patronage of Saints and Angels, who being ſecure

The vertue of the Phyſick which muſt cure us.

ure for themselves, are solicitous for us. 3. The testimony and sweet *promises of holy Scriptures*: For how often hath God told us; *I am prone to pity*; *I am ready to receive sinners*; *I will help them who doe their endeavours.* If therefore he denys not his *mercy to them that seek it*, and they seek it who *doe what lys in them*, let us bee confident he will not deny us his mercy. He also frequently calls on us, *Turn to me, and I will turn to you*: Now he cannot but say *truth*, and fulfill his *promise*; and doth not that soul convert her self to God, who doth her best to get his grace, and be reconciled unto him? Who then can choose but be of good Comfort, if he be of good Will?

By this Doctrine, and these prescribed Remedies, it appears that the only way to overcome Scruples, is,

1. *To obey our Spirituall Director.*

2. *To doe our best endeavour.*

But here arise two difficulties, in this easy lesson.

The

The first difficulty. The first is, If our Directors knowledge be small, his experience lesse, and his conscience not very good, how dare we trust our souls upon his Warrant?

Gerson's answer. *Gerson* answers: Thou wise Judger, I say thou errest and art deceived, for thou hast not committed thy self and thy soul to a *man*, because of his discretion and learning, but to *God* himself; and for his love thou obeyest man, because he is by him ordained thy Prelat and Superior. Therefore our obedience wilbe oftentimes so much more pleasing to God, and profitable to our souls, by how much more infirm and unworthy he is whom we refuse not to obey for Gods sake.

The second difficulty. The other difficulty is; If wee cannot satisfy our selves, that wee doe our best Endeavours, nor know that we have performed our duty?

St. *Thomas* answer. S. *Thomas* answers; We must first remove that which hinders grace, to wit, Sin. 2. We must convert our hearts from creatures

to

o our Creator. In a word, we must eteſt Sin, and chooſe God, and follow his ordinary means appointed n his Church for our direction: and his is the Summary of our duty.

The 22. Doubt.

If we fear we deteſt not Sin ſufficiently, becauſe we feel not ſo great ſorrow for the offence of God, as we doe ſometimes for a temporall loſſe?

LEt us aſſure our ſelves, First, We can never have ſo much ſorrow for our Sins, as Gods juſtice in rigour requires. 2. God doth not exact it of us, becauſe it is not in our power. 3. True ſorrow conſiſts not in feeling, but in Reaſon and Freewill. 4. It is better to have ſorrow ſometimes only in deſire than feeling. 5. It is not neceſſary this corporall or ſenſible grief be ſo great for ſpirituall as for temporall loſs, but it ſufficeth to uſe humane and morall diligence, with firm purpoſe of avoiding Sin. 6. It Is dangerous to make ſuch compariſons and reflexions for weak and

and fearfull Consciences: as, *If such a thing should happen, what should I doe? Should I rather chuse death, than such a Sin?* and the like: I say, there is no obligation to make such acts.

The 23. Doubt.

If we cannot ground our selves in a firm Hope of mercy; for that we are so frail and inconstant; We sin daily, and amend not our lives; We receive Gods blessings, and repay ill for good; Wee promise, protest, and vow fidelity, and practise nothing lesse.

TEll me, *afflicted Souls!* Should you see Christ dye daily for your daily sins, would you despair of mercy? Even so efficacious is his former death. If you fall hourely, rise again couragiously, and purpose to stand more constantly, and fear nothing; but draw Humility out of your Frailty, saying, *Whereof am I proud now? Where are my strong Resolutions? Why doe I judge others? Who is so feeble, fickle, frail, as I am? O Lord this is the*

Worm

Worm, that is so proud: Then cast all into Christs sacred wounds; and leaving all there, go on with as much quiet and Confidence, as if you had not sinned.

The 24. Doubt.

If we go not on with alacrity, because we know not that our Sins are forgiven, that our Confessions are good, and that we are in state of Grace?

WE must take notice, that in seeking these assurances, we may oftentimes directly lose them: 1. In seeking them too eagerly and unquietly. 2. In being *self-lovers*, and unwilling to be troubled. 3. In being ignorant of what we are bound to know: for (it seems) we conceive those works nothing worth, which are performed without gust, content, satisfaction to our selves, and quiet.

The way then is briefly this: 1. To seek *true peace*. 2. In God. 3. From his mercy, not our own industry. 4. To be resigned to want peace if he

he pleaſe. 5. To omit nothing we would or ſhould do by reaſon of the trouble we feel.

The 25. Doubt.

Though we cannot (in this life) aſſure our ſelves infallibly to be in good eſtate, yet if we could comfort our ſelves with moſt probable tokens of grace, whereby we might feel the pulſes of our hearts, and ſomewhat eaſe our anguiſh?

4. Signs of a good conſcience out of S. *Tho.* and *Bernard.*

SAint *Thomas* and S. *Bernard* aſſigne theſe four ſignes of a good conſcience. 1. To feel a ready *Willingneſs* in our hearts, to hear Gods word, and to learn the means to love and ſerve him. 2. To feel a *Forwardneſs* to do good Works. 3. To feel a hearty *Sorrow* for the offence of God. 4. To feel a firm *Purpoſe* to avoid all Sin.

A 5. out of *Gerſon.* To pronounce theſe three verities.

Gerſon adds a fifth: Who ſo can pronounce heartily and ſincerely theſe *three Verities*, though he had committed all ſins, and ſhould be prevented with ſodain death, let him ſecure himſelf he is in ſtate of Grace.

The

The *first Verity.* O Lord! If in this or that I have sinned against thy goodness, it truly displeases and grieves me, and I am ready to do penance for it, because I have offended thee, who art worthy of all honor, and have transgressed thy Law and Will, which is most holy, just, and reasonable.

Oh! that we would often recite these three truths; especially when we feel our consciences burthened? What infinite profit and comfort would redound to our souls?

The *second Verity.* O Lord! I have a good purpose and desire by thy grace to take heed I fall not into sin again, and to avoid to my power the occasions thereof, and to mortify my passions, and bad inclinations.

The *third Verity.* O Lord! I have a good Will and purpose to Confess my sins entirely, in due time and place, according to thy Ordinance, and that of thy holy Church.

We may ad to these, the devout frequentation of the Sacraments, which give life and justifying grace; The warrant of a skilful guide; And a lively confidence in the Divine bounty.

Three other signs.

The 26. Doubt.

If we are troubled, because we know not well when we give consent to sinfull Thoughts?

Rules to know when we consent to sin.

1. IF when the Thought is represented, we presently fly to the crucifix, expell it, disdain it, dislike it; it is not *Sin*, but *Merit*. 2. But if we carelesly linger in it when well perceived, it is Venial. 3. And if we consent to the Thought, and desire the Action, our sin is equall to the act, if it were committed. 4. But if we intend not the Act, but linger delightfully in the Thought, and the thing it self be Mortall, and deliberately entertained, it is also Mortal.

The 27. Doubt.

If we cannot well distinguish between Venial and Mortal sin?

1. WHat need we determine; let us Confess it, as it is committed.

2. *Mortall sin* cannot be committed without great corruption of Him who commits it, or great hurt to

to his Neighbor, or great contempt and neglect of God, (says *Richardus a S. Victore*): And S. *Thomas* says; He sins Mortally, whose total intention of mind is withdrawn from God, who is our last end.

Rich. à S. Victore.
S. *Thomas.*

3. Let us conclude with S. *Augustin* and *Gerson*: That it is dangerous, even in Prelats and Confessors, to define what is mortall sin, or give Rules therein.

S. *August.*
Gerson.

The 28. Doubt.

If that saying of Divines terrifies us; He that does against his doubt, sins: And, In things which are doubtfull, the securer part is to be chosen?

Faciens contra dubium incidit in peccatum.
In dubiis securior pars est eligenda.

WE may, in things which are Doubtfull, securely follow a Probable opinion: Now *Scruples are not Doubts, but false apprehensions*; and therefore on all sides, we may (and somtimes must) go against our own erroneous consciences, especially when *Obedience* commands it.

S. Augustin Tene certum, dimitte incertum.

it. Let us therefore, with S. *Augustin*, lay hold of that which is *certain*, and let go the *uncertain*: And what way is more sure and secure than *Obedience*?



The 29. And last Doubt.

If finally we are apprehensive and fearfull lest we should grow weary in the way of Vertue, and not Persever constantly in our Spiritual Exercises?

LEt us excite our Tepidity by the frequent perusall of this following discourse, and practise accordingly.

The *Patriarch Jacob*, in hope of obtaining the beautifull *Rachel*, serv'd *Labau* seven years with diligence and patience: But being couened by that disloyal worldling with il favoured *Lia*; what doth he? He neither loseth Courage nor Confidence; but with new constancy begins his other seven years service, with such admirable alacrity, and a heart so fix'd upon his desired reward, *that the time seem'd but a week* to him. Gen. 29.

O my soul! thou seekest and sighest after eternal Beatitude, consisting essentially in the blessed vision and fruition of God, (*signified by Rachel, according to* S. *Bernard*); For S. Bernard.

this thou haſt bound thy ſelf to ſerve God; But alas! The *world*, the *fleſh*, and the *Devil*, do ſo often beguile & blind thee, that thou takeſt *blear-ey'd Lia*, for *beautiful Rachel*, the *world* for *heaven*, the *fleſh* for the *Spirit*, and *diabolical Illuſions* for *Divine inſpirations*.

But what? Loſe not courage, nor confidence; Renew thy proteſtation of loyal ſervice; Serve God one other ſeven years; Suffer another ſlavery to get heaven, to dy in finall grace, and to be eternally joyned to that *bleſſed beauty* thou loveſt; Follow *Jeſus to mount Calvary*, to *conſummatum eſt*, to thy *laſt gaſp*; If thou ſtumbleſt, fall not; If thou falleſt, up again and march; Stand not, but go forward; for *he only that perſevers till the end, ſhall be ſaved*. Let neither frequent temptations, nor fearfull imaginations, nor ſtrong paſſions, nor bad inclinations, nor often fallings, nor ordinary frailty, daunt or diſmay thee. God is good and gracious, meek and mercifull; Thy reward is infinite and eternall; Thy friends are moe

in

in heaven, than on earth; *persever* then, and go forward; if thou canst not run, at least go fair and softly, and securely, after *Christ* thy *Captain*, crying, *Draw me unto thee, ô most dear Lord*; for I desire to follow thee and no other: but I am weak and lame, and therefore I make use of two crutches, *A strong resolution* never to forsake thy love, and *a lively confidence* in thy grace, goodness, and mercy.

O holy and happy, O pretious and highly to be prized *Perseverance!* O finall grace! the patrimony only of the elect, and portion of the predestinate! Fight manfully, *ô my soul!* get good habits timely; resist sin valiantly; fast, watch, pray, sigh and suffer perseverantly: heaven is worth thy pains. *Persever*, O my soul! *Persever*, *Persever*; that done, all is done; that wanting, all is undone. This, *O Satan!* thou knowest full well; and therefore little car'st to see me zealous for a *Lent*, for a *year*, for a *time*, so in the *end* thou may'st make me tire, tepide, and careless of my progress and

S. Bernard. and *Perſeverance*: 'tis my *Perſeverance* which thou only envieſt at; becauſe that only *conquers* thee, and *crowns* me eternally. I diſcover thy two main ſnares, (*ô ſubtill enemy!*) into which thou wouldſt allure my unwary ſoul; and thy *firſt* deſign failing, which was *to delay my converſion* to Gods ſervice, thou purſueſt thy *Second*, which is, *to weary me in my well-begun enterpriſe.*

To ſhift off *my Converſion*, thou urgeſt youth, long life, time enough; (thy dayly and dangerous deceits, by which more Chriſtians periſh, than by any other thy guiles and ſtratagems:) Thou knoweſt the peril of delay, in a matter ſo important, as is our converſion, perfection, ſalvation; Thou art not ignorant how one ſin draws on another; how he that to day is unfit, will be leſs ſo to morrow; how cuſtom grows into nature, breeds blindneſs, hardneſs of heart, and inſenſibility; how old diſeaſes are hardly and rarely cured; how God withdraws his grace when 'tis abuſed, refuſed, neglected; how much his juſtice by

delay

delay is exasperated, and that we heap *coales* on our own *heads* by our *negligence*. Thou art well skill'd in the uncertainty of our frail life, know'st the dangers, chances, changes, and accidents, which may speedily overwhelm us: therfore thou whispereſt, *stay a little, deferr yet for a time*; till God in whose hands are the moments of all time, takes from us all time, (who have so long abused the opportunity of time), and sends us into pains eternal without time.

But seeing me resolutely and violently breaking all thy chains, running and crying with S. *Augustin*; S. Augustin *Why shall I longer say to morrow? why not now? even at this instant?* thou now striveſt to undermine my *Perseverance*: But take courage, *ô my soul!* thy time of enduring will soon end, and thy ensuing joy will be without end. Hearken not to thy sworn enemies enchantments; sit not, stand not, sleep not; but pray, watch, and walk, *whilst thou hast* light and life, *that the darkness of eternal night* and death *overtake thee not*.

And

And since thy Loving Lord, is both able and willing to succour and support thee, and to turn every thing to thy advantage, even thy imperfections, frailties and failings, (For thou art warranted, *that so sure as God is God, so sure it is, that he will permit nothing to befall us, but for our greatest good, and his own glory, and that it is most grateful unto him we so judge of him*;) doubt not of his providence and protection, not fear to permit him to deal with thee as he best pleaseth, and to remain in a perfect indifferency to all his divine ordinances and dispositions, saying; *Since it is thy will, O Lord, it is certain to be my good; be it so: I am as sure thou lovest me, as that thou livest with me: Away then all diffidence, disloyalty, inconstancy: How many Saints have you perverted? how many souls have you damned? Without thee O holy Perseverance all is lost, with thee all is secure; Grace till the end, Glory without end: Welcome holy Confidence! the main support of my life, and the life of my Perseverance; I am content, O my Lord*

Rusbrochius.

Lord, to be conducted by thee for time and eternity, as thou best pleasest; Lead me by land or water, by desolation or devotion, by darkness or day, by sickness or health, I will adhere to thee constantly.

If it be thy blessed will, *O Loving Lord*, that I creep as a snail towards Perfection, I will neither be troubled nor dismayed, I desire not to fly faster than thou enablest me, I quiet my self with the grace thou givest me, which I acknowledge to be not only beyond my deserts, but better for me than my own desires. Finally I here make a *generall Resolution*, and a *generous Resignation* of my whole self into thy holy hands; hoping that it will give worth and value to all my actions and sufferings.

A form of generall Resolution.

O my Soveraign and sweet maker! my whole Will and desire (according to my great obligation, former profession, and present protestation) is to serve and love thee, and to fulfill thy blessed Will in all things, and to be wholly thine at all times, and in all things whatsoever. 'Tis thy Honour I only aym at, thy

Glory

Glory I only intend, and thy Will, I only seek to accomplish: To thee alone I render and wish all benediction and eternall praise, and with cordiall Joy I say Amen to all that is possessed by thy most amiable and perfect goodness; and joyning my humble desires and devotion with all those that love thee, I implore that we may be all thine, and that thou wilt be All in us all.

And now, *O my soul*, since thou hast in some sort happily begun a course of Prayer, Recollection, Abnegation, and Humility, according to Obedience, and supported by Confidence; Let the Devill storm, let Flesh and blood rebell, let the World murmure; Answer them all, *Quod scripsi, scripsi*; my Vows and Promises must and shall stand & I am content to sign it with my blood: I will sooner dye than swerve from my well-setled Resolutions, or cancell the free deed and gift of my self to my Saviours service; Darkness, Desolation, Death and Devill shall never make me change.

For further helps to perseverance, read the 22. 23. 24. ch. of St. *Teresa's* life, Written by her self; And her book entitled, The way to Perfection.

Live

Live my good Purposes to love my dear Lord unchangeably, irrevocably, eternally.



Cant. 2. 16.

My beloved is mine, and I am his.

2 Tim. c. 4 v. 7, 8.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which our Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing.

James 1. 12.

Blessed is the man that indureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which our Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Revelation 2. 10.

Be thou faithfull untill death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

FINIS.

Errata.

In the *Conflict.*

PAge 32. line 2. for *from* read *form*, p. 45. l. 15. for *weary* r. *wary*, p. 69. l. 25. for *mediations* r. *meditations*, p. 143. l. 28. for *his* r. *he*, p. 143. l. 29. for *its* r. *his*, p. 161. l. 29. for *ordinary* r. *ordinarily*, p. 201. l. 2. for *pleasure* r. *please*, p. 277. l. 2. for *many* r. *may*.

In the *Conqueſt.*

PAge 3. l. 29. for *ſome* r. *ſon*. In the Exerciſes.

Page 103. l. 12. for *eat his* r. *eat as his*. In the Maxims.